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VOL. I.

MEMOIRS OF ISAAC PENINGTON:

AND

SELECTIONS FROM THE LETTERS AND PAPERS

OF

WILLIAM GROVER.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

ISAAC PENINGTON;

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A REVIEW OF HIS WRITINGS:

2966

BY

JOSEPH GURNEY BEVAN.

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THOMAS KITE, 64 WALNUT STREET.

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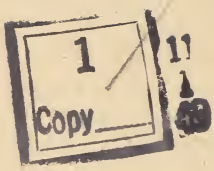

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INTRODUCTION.

The character of a man may be known by his writings: and it must be allowed of greater importance to inspect the thoughts of a virtuous man, than simply to know the outward circumstances of his life. But when we are pleased or edified with the writings of an author of distinction, we become naturally curious to know the manner in which he passed his time: and, on the other hand, if we are led from the perusal of biography, to believe that the subject of it was a person qualified to please or to edify, we are disposed to continue our acquaintance, by perusing also the memorials of his wisdom which he has left behind him.

It is chiefly on the former account that a collection of the few scattered accounts of the life of Isaac Penington would be, if well executed, a useful work. His numerous tracts have been three times edited, and lie open to the access of every one. They are generally grateful and consolatory to that class of readers which is composed of persons who feel their own feeble state, with respect to religious concerns; and desire to be, so far as it is right they should be, assisted by the experience of others. But two quarto, or four octavo volumes, closely printed, are, to many, formidable things; and it is certain too, that considerable attention of mind is a requisite qualification, and considerable calmness of mind a very desirable one, to sit down to the perusal of the valuable remains of this eminent Friend. Cursory readers, also, have imputed to Isaac Penington the charge of mysticism; a term, as generally used, of not the most definite import, but sometimes sufficient to deter the impatient from examining for themselves into the justice of the charge.

It is then worth the attempt to introduce, by a short memorial, so excellent a writer as Isaac Penington, to the knowledge of such as are not likely otherwise to undertake to know him for themselves; and there is the more reason to hope that the account which I have compiled, may occasion a desire to know more of him, because it must necessarily include many extracts, in which he will be permitted to relate, in his own terms, his own testimony.

In the narrative considerable use is made of a manuscript Account of many particular events in the life of Mary Penington, wife of Isaac Penington, written by herself. Recourse has also been had to a manuscript Collection of letters written on various occasions by Isaac Penington, lately presented by John Kendall, of Colchester, to the library belonging to Friends in London.

However, beside the many specimens of his temper and manner, which are interspersed throughout this biographical sketch, I have provided a slight epitome of his written labours, in the Review* which follows it. By the perusal of both, I believe the reader will form an idea, not very far from the truth, of the character of this our predecessor in profession. I hope that it may induce him occasionally to have immediate recourse to his instructive page; and I heartily desire that an acquaintance with it may be beneficial; as it will be, if it prove the means of leading him to a more intimate acquaintance with his own wants, and with the power and love of his Redeemer.

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* In the second part of the Review the reader will frequently observe mention made of Whiting's Catalogue. The title at length is "A Catalogue of Friends' Books; written by many of the people called Quakers, from the beginning or first appearance of the said people, collected for a general service, by J. W. London. 1708:" about 238 pages, octavo. It is the prime book for such as wish to make a collection of our ancient Friends' writings.

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MEMOIRS,

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CHAP. I.

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Isaac Penington was born about the year 1616, heir, to use the words of his son-in-law* William Penn, to a fair inheritance. It would be gratifying to trace the steps of the childhood of a man, in whom the simplicity of the child so long survived the weakness; but until further search can be made, it must suffice to learn from the same author, that his education was suitable to his quality among men, and that he had all the

* By marriage with Gulielma Maria Springett, daughter of Isaac Penington's wife by a former husband.

advantages that the schools and universities of his own country could bestow; as well as such as arose from the conversation of some of the most knowing and considerable men of the time. He arrived at manhood at a period when England was agitated with the tempest of civil commotion, by means of the discord between Charles I. and his parliament; and as the father of Penington was himself a violent partisan, the son, had his temper inclined him to enter the lists, might probably soon have arisen to eminence in the republic. But he seems early to have set his mind on another contest than the one for worldly power; and "to have chosen a life dedicated to an inquiry after God, and a holy fellowship with his despised" people. He chose, he sought, he strove, and he obtained; but had his choice been to follow the path into which his father had entered, disappointment would most likely have been the ultimate consequence. The elder Penington had been chief magistrate of the metropolis, he had raised the forces of the city to join the parliament's army, he had been intrusted with the charge of the Tower, and had been one of the council of state; but the Restoration reversed the condition of public affairs, and he died a prisoner in the fortress which he had formerly commanded.

But though Isaac Penington forbore to enter into the contests which rent the nation, he was far from being an unconcerned spectator of the misery of his country. To this some of the tracts which he published long before he joined the Society of Friends, bear ample testimony. But he looked for the cause of the evil rather in the depraved state of man's heart in general, than in any particular party or set of men. In the preface to one tract, published in 1650, entitled, according to the fashion of titles in those days, "A Voice out of the thick Darkness," he mentions an intention he had before conceived of publishing something concerning the state of affairs. "I should have expressed," says he, "ill will to none, but only have ut-

tered that deep affection that was then in me, towards the soldering and healing the distempers of such spirits as are made more miserable by their own discontents, than they could be by any thing else that can, in probability, befall them."—"There are one sort of men whom I should more especially have applied myself unto; who are wonderous eager after making the nation happy; whose spirits can be no ways satisfied till they see the attainment of that universal freedom, and the flowing forth of that universal, speedy justice, which is easy to be desired, but hard to be met with." To persons of this description, he gives the following advice. "Be content to pass through your pilgrimage without the full enjoyment of that freedom ye have desired, and pressed so hard after. There is a power above, whose will may cross yours in this; which may as well find fault with your untowardness to be governed, as with the self-seeking of such as have been governors."—"It is a brave thing sometimes to oppose the yoke; but a braver, from judgment to submit unto it. It is, in many cases, better for particular persons, yea for societies, to bear than avoid the yoke."—"It is the stiffness of the neck, and unbrokenness of the spirit that chiefly makes all our yokes so harsh." But he subjoins, "Groan, pant after, and, in a just way, pursue the attainment of perfect freedom. Lie not down as a slave, with a base, abject spirit, counting slavery best; but with a sweet spirit submit to it for necessity's sake: and let a sense appear of your prizing and desiring of liberty. And what way of attaining it is made out to you plainly and evidently justifiable, forbear not to fall in with; yet not in such a violent and irrational manner, as to make your more noble parts far worse slaves to brutish passions within, to avoid a more inferior slavery of the outward and more ignoble part."

It is probable, that notwithstanding the mildness and moderation of his temper, and his great preference of peace to contention, Penington in his judgment inclined

to a commonwealth. For in the following year he published a pamphlet entitled "The fundamental Right, Safety and Liberty of the People (which is radically in themselves, derivatively in the parliament, their substitutes or representatives) asserted." "This right," saith he, "lieth chiefly in these three things—in the people's choice of their government and governors—in the establishment of that government and governors whom they shall choose—and in the alteration of either as they shall find cause." These principles are democratical, and accordingly the *Salus populi, suprema lex*, is the prominent feature of the book. But it is at most a representative, not a pure, democracy at which the author aims. He shews the impossibility of the people acting for themselves: and the impropriety of a parliament assuming both legislative and administrative power. He seems even not averse to the latter being placed in the hands of a king. "Though," these are his words, "I shall not plead for the resettlement of kingly government (for I am not so far engaged in my affections to it, as it *yet* hath been) yet I would have a fair and friendly shaking hands with it, and not any blame laid upon it beyond its desert. For doubtless it is both proper, good, and useful in its kind; and hath its advantages above any other government on the one hand, as it hath also its disadvantages on the other hand."

In short, though the desire of Penington seems to have been the general welfare of the people: he only expected it (so far as civil policy can effect it,) from the preservation of every rank in the state within its own limits. "Kingly power," thus he writes in his prefatory address to the parliament, "did pass its limits, we may now speak it." The times of Charles I. the late stretches of prerogative by that monarch, and the attempts at power independent of the parliament, were of course fresh in his memory. But Penington immediately subjoins, "Doth parliamentary power keep within its limits?"—"And if things should yet devolve

lower, into the great and confused body of the people, is it likely they would keep their limits?"—"Man cannot be free in himself, nor free from himself, (while self is in him it will make him selfish) and while it is so, others under his power or within his reach cannot be free."

Another short extract from the body of the work may close the description of the political part of the character of Isaac Penington, and show that universal benevolence formed its basis. "There is not one sort of men upon the face of the earth, to whom I bear any enmity in my spirit (though in some respect I must confess myself an enemy to every sort of men) but wish, with all my heart, they might all attain and enjoy as much peace, prosperity, and happiness as their state will bear. There are not any to whom I should envy government: but, whoever they are, they should have my vote on their behalf, whom I saw fitted for it and called to it."*

At the time of these publications Penington was more than thirty years of age; they are not, therefore, to be considered as the mere effusions of an ingenuous youthful mind; but as the result of observation and judgment, operating on a mind amply endued with philanthropy and piety. Nor can his attachment, at a much

* The following extract of a letter written many years after may further show how little of a politician, as the word is commonly used, was Penington. See Kendall's MS. Coll. vol. i. p. 334.—"Now as to his relation of the affairs of the late times, I was observed by all sorts to be one of a retired spirit and conversation, not meddling with affairs, covenants, or engagements; nor taking any advantage of preferment, gain, or honour, in those times, when thrust upon me; but mourned with those that suffered in those times; not expecting much happiness from outward changes; nor satisfied with any of the changes that then were. I would I could yet see the change which I have all along, longed to see, which was not of the outward form of government, but from unrighteousness to righteousness. This is the plain truth of my heart in these things, and I could wish from my heart that the Lord God of heaven and earth had taught thee to fear and love God and the king as He hath done me, in truth and righteousness."

later period, to the principles of Friends, be ascribed of course to the ardency of a youthful imagination, for he had then arrived at least at his fortieth year; an age at which the manly character is, if ever, fully developed: and he appears, besides, by his writings, to have been a man of unusual calmness of mind. He had married, in what year I do not find,* Mary, the widow of Colonel Springett; and at the time of his adopting the profession of Friends lived on his estate at Chalfont, called St. Peter's, in Buckinghamshire. The ground of their union was a coincidence in religious sentiments. Each had long been dissatisfied with many of the forms in use, even in those times of supposed reformation; each was earnestly seeking after a religion that could bring assurance with it; and each was in no small degree already acquainted with spiritual exercises, and devotions. One day, as they were walking together in a park, a man who had lately attached himself to the people called Quakers, rode by; and remarking their gay apparel, reproved them aloud for their pride. Mary Penington replied with disdain, "You are a public preacher indeed, thus to preach on the high-way." The stranger, who having said what appeared so far sufficient for him, was probably riding on, now turned back: for he said that he again felt a love for Isaac Penington, as he saw grace in his very countenance. He therefore drew up close to the pales, and spoke to them of the light and grace of God, which had appeared to all men. Isaac Penington engaged him in discourse, and the occupier of the premises invited him in; but as he perceived Penington to be superior to him in argument, by means of his natural and acquired abilities, and as he knew himself to be but young in religious experience, he declined the debate; but said that he would the next day bring with him a man, who should answer all the questions and objections of his

* Probably not later than 1654, ætat. 38.

learned disputant. The person thus intended to be produced was George Fox; but the zealous stranger was disappointed of his assistance; and our pious couple were visited by two other Friends, namely, Thomas Curtis of Reading, and William Simpson from Lancashire. I do not find any particulars of their conversation so far as it related to Isaac. Mary has left an account of the effect of the visit on her mind, as tending to her fully giving up her heart to the doctrines and practices of Friends. It is also not to be doubted that Isaac received in this conference some inducements to make trial of their doctrines; but he was not hasty to adopt their manners; and indeed those of the persons who had declared to him these doctrines, appeared very mean and contemptible.

It is not easy to fix with precision the date of the convincement of Isaac Penington. Alexander Parker, an eminent Friend, in his testimony prefixed to Penington's works, says that he first saw him at a meeting at Reading in the year 1656 (probably attracted thither by acquaintance with Thomas Curtis); and that though Penington did not then bear the garb and appearance of a Friend, his soul cleaved to him in the bowels of the love of truth. William Penn, in a similar testimony, but in his own peculiar style, says, "About the year 1657 it pleased the Lord to send him a Peter, to declare to him that the time of the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit, and breaking forth of the heavenly work of God, in the souls of men and women, was come; and many Aquilas and Priscillas came after, who instructed him in the way of God more perfectly." It seems, however, to have been at a meeting held at the house of John Crook, who had been in the commission of the peace, in Bedfordshire, and by means of the preaching of George Fox, that Isaac Penington became fully satisfied. Of this meeting, which was held about the time called Whitsuntide, 1658, and of the doctrine preached in it, there is a large account in the Journal, or rather Annals of George Fox. "At this meeting," says Alex-

ander Parker before mentioned, "the mystery of iniquity was so opened, and the mystery of the gospel of peace so plainly manifested, that he (Penington) was fully satisfied: and from that time gave up himself to the obedience of Truth—took up the cross—and suffered with us for the name and testimony of Jesus." These dates bespeak him to have been from forty to forty-two years of age when he joined the rising and persecuted society of Friends. The steps which led to this event, and the peaceful establishment of the mind of Isaac Penington in the adoption of this despised profession, let his own words declare.

"I was acquainted," says he, "with a spring of life from my childhood, which enlightened me in my tender years, and pointed my heart towards the Lord, begetting true sense in me, and faith, and hope, and love, and humility, and meekness, &c. so that indeed I was a wonder to some that knew me, because of the savour and life of religion which dwelt in my heart, and appeared in my conversation. But I never durst trust the spring of my life, and the springings up of life therefrom: but in reading the scriptures, gathered what knowledge I could therefrom, and set this over the spring and springings of life in me; and indeed judged that I ought so to do. Notwithstanding which, the Lord was very tender and merciful to me, helping me to pray, and helping me to understand the scriptures, and opening and warming my heart every day. And truly, my soul was very near the Lord, and my heart was made and preserved very low and humble before Him, and very sensible of his rich love and mercy to me in the Lord Jesus Christ: as I did daily from my heart cry grace, grace, unto Him, in every thing my soul received and partook of from Him."

"Indeed I did not look to have been so broken, shattered, and distresssed, as I afterwards was, and could by no means understand the meaning thereof, my heart truly and earnestly desiring after the Lord, and not having the sense of any guilt upon me."—"At that

time, when I was broken and dashed to pieces in my religion, I was in a congregational way; but soon after parted with them, yet in great love, relating to them how the hand of the Lord was upon me, and how I was smitten in the inward part of my religion, and could not now hold up an outward form of that which I inwardly wanted; having lost my God, my Christ, my faith, my knowledge, my life, my all. And so we parted very lovingly, I wishing them well, even the presence of that God whom I wanted, promising to return to them again, if ever I met with that which my soul wanted, and had clearness in the Lord so to do.

"After I was parted from them, I never joined to any way or people; but lay mourning day and night, pleading with the Lord, why he had forsaken me, and why I should be made so miserable through my love to him, and sincere desires after him. For truly, I can say, I had not been capable of so much misery as my soul lay in for many years, had not my love been so deep and true towards the Lord my God, and my desires so great after the sensible enjoyment of his Spirit, according to the promise and way of the gospel. Yet this I can also say in uprightness of heart, it was not gifts I desired, to appear and shine before men in: but grace and holiness, and the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in me, to act my heart by his grace, and to preserve me in holiness."

"Now indeed the Lord at length had compassion on me, and visited me: though in a time and way wherein I expected Him not; nor was I willing (as to the natural part) to have *that* the way, which God showed me to *be* the way: but the Lord opened mine eye, and that which I know to be of Him in me closed with it, and owned it: and the pure seed was raised by his power, and my heart taught to know and own the seed, and to bow and worship before the Lord in the pure power, which was then in my heart. So that of a truth I sensibly knew and felt my Saviour, and was taught by Him to take up the cross, and to deny that understanding,

knowledge, and wisdom, which had so long stood in my way; and then I learned that lesson (being really taught it of the Lord), what it is indeed to become a fool for Christ's sake. I cannot say but I had learned somewhat of it formerly; but I never knew how to keep to what I had learned till that day."*

In this extract there is not any express declaration that the way which was at length cast up before the view of Isaac Penington, and in which he was enabled steadily to proceed through life, was the way pursued by Friends. The following is more explicit on that head. It is intitled, "A true and faithful relation, in brief, concerning myself, in reference to my spiritual travails, and the Lord's dealings with me. I say true and faithful, because it is of the Truth, and not given forth in my own will, but in the Lord's will and requirings of me at this time, for his service." There will, doubtless, be found in it some of the same kind of matter as forms a part of the extract already cited. To the spiritual traveller, however, this similarity will not be insipid, and it is possible that even critical readers may allow that the following piece is not unaptly selected, to fill up the more general outline of the preceding one.

"I have been," says our amiable author, "a man of sorrow and affliction from my childhood, feeling the want of the Lord, and mourning after Him; separated by Him from the love, nature, and spirit of this world; and turned in spirit towards Him, almost ever since I could remember."

The Christian reader, probably, will not revolt at this exordium, or call it a gloomy portrait. He will call to mind the prophetic declaration concerning the Redeemer, "He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief:" and will by no means forget his Master's own consolatory sentence, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

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* Penington's Works, 2nd edit. vol. ii. pp. 511, 512.

"In the sense of my lost estate," thus Penington proceeds, "I sought after the Lord; I read the scriptures; I watched over mine own heart; I cried unto the Lord for what I felt the want of; I blessed his name in what He mercifully did for me, and bestowed on me. Whatever I read in the scriptures, as the way of God to my understanding, I gave myself to the faithful practice of; being contented to meet with all the reproach, opposition, and several kinds of sufferings, which it pleased the Lord to measure out to me therein. And I cannot but say that the Lord was good unto me, did visit me, did teach me, did help me, did testify his acceptance of me many times, to the refreshing and joy of my heart before him."

"But my soul was not satisfied with what I met with, nor indeed could be, there being further quickenings and pressings in my spirit, after a more full, certain, and satisfactory knowledge: even after the sense, sight, and enjoyment of God, as was testified in the scriptures to have been felt and enjoyed in the former times; for I saw plainly that there was a stop of the streams, and a great falling short of the power, life, and glory, which they partook of. We had not so the Spirit, nor were so in the faith, nor did so walk and live in God, as they did. They were come to Mount Sion, and the heavenly Jerusalem, &c., which we had hardly so much as the literal knowledge or apprehension what they were. So that I saw the whole course of religion among us was, for the most part, but a talk, to what they felt, enjoyed, possessed, and lived in."

"This sense made me sick at heart indeed, and set me upon deep crying to God, close searching the scriptures, and waiting on God, that I might receive the pure sense and understanding of them, from and in the light, and by the help of his Spirit. And what the Lord did bestow on me in that state, with thankfulness I remember before Him at this very day; for He was then my God, and a pitier and watcher over me:

though He had not then pleased to direct me how to stay my mind upon Him. And then I was led (indeed I was led, I did not run of myself) into a way of separation from the worship of the world, into a gathered society; for this both the scripture, and the Spirit of God in me gave testimony unto; and what we then met with, and what leadings and help we then felt, there is a remembrance and testimony in my heart to this day. But there was somewhat wanting, and we mistook our way, for whereas we should have pressed forward into the spirit and power, we ran too much outward into the letter and form; and though the Lord in many things helped us, yet therein He was against us, and brought darkness, confusion, and scattering upon us. I was sorely broken and darkened, and in this darkened state sometimes lay still for a long season, secretly mourning, and crying out to the Lord, night and day. Sometimes I ran about, hearkening after what might appear or break forth in others: but never met with any thing whereto there was the least answer in my heart, save in one people, who had a touch of truth: but I never expressed so much to any of them, nor indeed felt them at all able to reach my condition. At last, after all my distresses, wanderings, and sore travails, I met with some writings of this people called Quakers, which I cast a slight eye upon and disdained, as falling very short of that wisdom, light, life, and power which I had been longing for, and searching after. I had likewise, some pretty distance of time after this, opportunity of meeting with some of them; and divers of them were by the Lord moved (I know it to be so since) to come to me. As I remember, at the very first, they reached to the life of God in me: which life answered their voice, and caused a great love in me to spring to them; but still in my reasonings with them, and disputes alone (in my mind) concerning them, I was very far off from owning them as so knowing the Lord, or so appearing in his life and power, as my condition needed, and as my soul waited for. Yea, the

more I conversed with them, the more I seemed in my understanding and reason to get over them, and to trample them under my feet, as a poor, weak, silly, contemptible generation, who had some smattering of Truth in them, and some honest desires towards God: but very far off from the clear and full understanding of his way and will. And this was the effect almost of every discourse with them: they still reached my heart, and I felt them in the secrets of my soul; which caused the love in me always to continue, yea, sometimes to increase towards them; but daily my understanding got more and more over them, and therein I daily more and more despised them. After a long time I was invited to hear one of them (as I had been often, they in tender love pitying me, and feeling my want of that which they possessed): and there was an answer in my heart, and I went with fear and trembling, with desires to the Most High, who was over all and knew all, that I might not receive any thing for truth which was not of Him, nor withstand any thing which was of Him: but might bow before the appearance of the Lord my God, and none other. And, indeed, when I came, I felt the presence and power of the Most High among them, and words of truth from the spirit of truth reaching to my heart and conscience, opening my state as in the presence of the Lord. Yea, I did not only feel words and demonstrations from without; but I felt the dead quickened, the Seed raised; insomuch that my heart (in the certainty of light, and clearness of true sense) said, *This is He, this is He, there is no other: this is He whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood; who was always near me, and had often begotten life in my heart; but I knew Him not distinctly, nor how to receive Him or dwell with Him.* And, then in this sense (in the melting and breakings of my spirit) was I given up to the Lord, to become his, both in waiting for the further revealing of his Seed in me, and to serve Him in the life and power of his Seed."

"Now what I met with after this, in my travails, in

my waitings, in my spiritual exercises, is not to be uttered; only in general I may say this, I met with the very strength of hell. The cruel oppressor roared upon me, and made me feel the bitterness of his captivity, while he had any power: yea, the Lord was far from my help, and from the voice of my roaring. I also met with deep subtilties and devices to entangle me in that wisdom which seemeth able to make wise in the things of God; but indeed is foolishness, and a snare to the soul, bringing it back into captivity, where the enemy's gins prevail. And what I met with outwardly from my own dear father, from my kindred, from my servants, from the people and powers of the world, for no other cause but fearing my God, worshipping Him as He hath required of me, and bowing to his Seed, which is his Son, who is to be worshipped by men and angels for evermore, the Lord my God knoweth, before whom my heart and ways are; who preserved me in love to them, in the midst of all I suffered from them, and doth still so preserve me; blessed be his pure and holy name. But some may desire to know what I have at last met with. I answer, *I have met with the Seed.* Understand that word, and thou wilt be satisfied, and inquire no further. I have met with my God; I have met with my Saviour: and He hath not been present with me without his salvation; but I have felt the healings drop upon my soul from under his wings. I have met with the true knowledge, the knowledge of life, the living knowledge, the knowledge which is life, and this hath had the true virtue in it, which my soul hath rejoiced in, in the presence of the Lord. I have met with the Seed's Father, and in the Seed I have felt him my Father. There I have read his nature, his love, his compassions, his tenderness, which have melted, overcome, and changed my heart before Him. I have met with the Seed's faith, which hath done and doth that, which the faith of man can never do. I have met with the true birth, with the birth which is heir of the kingdom, and inherits the kingdom. I have met with the true spirit of prayer and supplication, wherein

the Lord is prevailed with, and which draws from Him whatever the condition needs: the soul always looking up to Him in the will, and in the time and way, which is acceptable with Him. What shall I say? I have met with the true peace, the true righteousness, the true holiness, the true rest of the soul, the everlasting habitation, which the redeemed dwell in; and I know all these to be true, in Him that is true: and am capable of no doubt, dispute, or reasoning in my mind about them; it abiding there where it hath received the full assurance and satisfaction. And also I know very well and distinctly in spirit where the doubts and disputes are, and where the certainty and full assurance is; and in the tender mercy of the Lord am preserved out of the one, and in the other."

"Now, the Lord knows, these things I do not utter in a boasting way; but would rather be speaking of my nothingness, my emptiness, my weakness, my manifold infirmities which I feel more than ever. The Lord hath broken the man's part in me, and I am a worm and no man before Him. I have no strength to do any good or service for Him; nay, I cannot watch over or preserve myself. I feel daily that I keep not alive my own soul; but am weaker before men, yea, weaker in my spirit, as in myself, than ever I have been. But I cannot but utter to the praise of my God, and I feel his arm stretched out for me: and my weakness, which I feel in myself, is not my loss, but advantage before Him. And these things I write, as having no end at all therein of my own, but felt it this morning required of me; and so in submission and subjection to my God have I given up to do it, leaving the success and service of it with him."

"Aylesbury, 15th 3d Mo. 1667."*

Though the two preceding papers will serve to show

* In Ellwood's Test. prefixed to Penington's Works, vol. i. p. xxxv.

many of the toilsome steps, which were trodden by Isaac Penington in pursuit of truth; yet the following will probably be an acceptable, and not an unsuitable addition. It is both descriptive and exhortatory; it is in its tenour, consistent with the others, yet not tautologous. One occasion of his sorrows, it more fully describes; the tendency of one tenet on a depressed and ingenious mind, it more particularly displays.

"My heart from my childhood," says he, "was pointed towards the Lord, whom I feared, and longed after, from my tender years: wherein I felt that I could not be satisfied with (nor indeed seek after) the things of this perishing world, which naturally pass away: but I desired true sense of, and unity with, that which abideth for ever. There was somewhat indeed then still within me (even the Seed of eternity) which leavened and balanced my spirit almost continually; but I knew it not distinctly, so as to turn to it, and give up to it, entirely and understandingly."

"In this temper of mind I earnestly sought after the Lord, applying myself to hear sermons, and read the best books I could meet with, but especially the scriptures, which were very sweet and savoury to me. Yea, I very earnestly desired and pressed after the knowledge of the Scriptures, but was much afraid of receiving men's interpretations of them, or of fastening any interpretation upon them myself; but waited much, and prayed much, that, from the Spirit of the Lord, I might receive the true understanding of them, and that He would chiefly endue me with that knowledge, which I might feel sanctifying and saving."

"And indeed I did sensibly receive of his love, of his mercy, and of his grace, which I felt still freely to move towards me; and at seasons when I was most filled with the sense of my own unworthiness, and had least expectations of the manifestations of them. But I was exceedingly entangled about Election and Reprobation, (having drunk in that doctrine, according as it was then held forth by the strictest of those that were termed

Puritans; and as then seemed to be very manifest and positive, from Rom. ix. &c.), fearing lest, notwithstanding all my desires and seekings after the Lord, He might in his decree have passed me by; and I felt it would be bitter to me to bear his wrath, and be separated from his love for evermore; yet, if He had so decreed, it would be, and I should (notwithstanding these fair beginnings and hopes) fall away and perish at the last."

"In this great trouble and grief (which was much added to by not finding the Spirit of God so in me and with me, as I had read and believed the former Christians had it,) and in mourning over and grappling with secret corruptions and temptations, I spent many years, and fell into great weakness of body; and, often casting myself upon my bed, did wring my hands and weep bitterly: begging earnestly of the Lord daily, that I might be pitied by Him, and helped against my enemies, and be made conformable to the image of his Son, by his own renewing power."

"And indeed at last (when my nature was almost spent, and the pit of despair was even closing its mouth upon me), mercy sprang, and deliverance came, and the Lord my God owned me, and sealed his love unto me, and light sprung within me; which made not only the scriptures, but the very outward creatures glorious in my eye: so that every thing was sweet and pleasant, and lightsome round about me. But I soon felt that this estate was too high and glorious for me, and I was not able to abide in it, it so overcame my natural spirits. Wherefore, blessing the name of the Lord for his great goodness to me, I prayed unto Him to take that from me which I was not able to bear; and to give me such a proportion of his light and presence, as was suitable to my present state, and might fit me for his service. Whereupon this was presently removed from me; yet a savour remained with me, wherein I had sweetness, and comfort, and refreshment for a long season."

"But my mind did not then know how to turn to, and dwell with that which gave me the savour; nor rightly to read what God did daily write in my heart; which sufficiently manifested itself to be of Him, by its living virtue, and pure operation upon me."

"But I looked upon the scriptures to be my rule, and so would weigh the inward appearances of God to me, by what was outwardly written; and durst not receive any thing from God immediately, as it sprang from the fountain, but only in that mediate way. Herein did I limit the Holy One of Israel, and exceedingly hurt my own soul, as I afterwards felt, and came to understand."

"Yet the Lord was tender to me, and condescended exceedingly, opening scriptures to me freshly every day, teaching and instructing, warming and comforting my heart thereby. And truly He did help me to pray, to believe, and to love Him and his appearances in any; yea, to love all the sons of men, and all his creatures, with a true love. But that in me which knew not the appearances of the Lord in my spirit, but would limit Him to words of Scriptures formerly written,—that proceeded yet further, and would be raising a fabric of knowledge out of the scriptures, and gathering a perfect rule (as I thought) concerning my heart, my words, my ways, my worship: and according to what I thus drank in (after this manner from the scriptures,) I practised; and with much seriousness of spirit, and prayer to God, fell a helping to build up an independent congregation, wherein the savour of life and the presence of God was fresh with me; as I believe there are yet some alive of that congregation can testify."

"This was my state, when I was smitten, broken, and distressed by the Lord, confounded in my worship, confounded in my knowledge, stripped of all in one day (which it is hard to utter), and was matter of amazement to all that beheld me. I lay open and naked to all that would inquire of me, and strive to search out what might be the cause the Lord should deal so with me.

They would at first be jealous that I had sinned and provoked him so to do; but when they had scanned things thoroughly, and I had opened my heart nakedly to them, I do not remember any one that ever retained that sense concerning me. My soul remembereth the wormwood and gall, the exceeding bitterness of that state, and is still humbled in me, in the remembrance of it before the Lord. Oh! how did I wish with Job, that I might come before Him, and bowingly plead with Him; for indeed I had no sense of any guilt upon me, but was sick of love towards Him, and as one violently rent from the bosom of his beloved! Oh, how gladly would I have met with death! For I was weary all the day long, and afraid of the night, and weary also of the night-season, and afraid of the ensuing day."

"I remember my grevious and bitter mournings to the Lord. How often I did say, *O Lord, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why hast Thou broken me to pieces? I had no delight but Thee, no desire after any but Thee. My heart was bent wholly to serve Thee, and Thou hast even fitted me* (as appeared to my sense) *by many deep exercises and experiences for thy service. Why dost Thou make me thus miserable?* Sometimes I would cast mine eye upon a scripture, and my heart would even melt within me. At other times I would desire to pray to my God as I had formerly done; but I found I knew Him not, and I could not tell how to pray, or in any wise to come near Him, as I had formerly done. In this condition I wandered up and down from mountain to hill, from one sort to another, with a cry in my spirit, *Can ye tell news of my beloved? Where doth He dwell? Where doth he appear?* But their voices were still strange to me; and I should retire sad and oppressed, and bowed down in spirit, from them."

"Now surely, all serious, sober, sensible people will be ready to inquire how I came satisfyingly to know

the Lord at length: or whether I do yet certainly know Him, and am yet truly satisfied."

"Yes indeed, I am satisfied at my very heart. Truly my heart is united to Him whom I longed after, in an everlasting covenant of pure life and peace."

"Well then, how came this about? will some say. Why, thus. The Lord opened my spirit. The Lord gave me the certain and sensible feeling of the pure Seed, which had been with me from the beginning. The Lord caused his holy power to fall upon me, and gave me such an inward demonstration and feeling of the Seed of life, that I cried out in my spirit, *This is He, this is He, there is not another, there never was another. He was always near me, though I knew Him not,* (not so sensibly, not so distinctly, as now He was revealed in me, and to me by the Father). *O that I might now be joined to Him, and He alone might live in me!* And so, in the willingness which God had wrought in me (in this day of his power to my soul), I gave up to be instructed, exercised, and led by Him, in the waiting for and feeling of his holy Seed, that all might be wrought out of me which could not live with the Seed, but would be hindering the dwelling and reigning of the Seed in me, while it remained and had power. And so I have gone through a sore travail, and fight of afflictions and temptations of many kinds; wherein the Lord hath been merciful to me, in helping me, and preserving the spark of life in me, in the midst of many things which had befallen me, whose nature tended to quench and extinguish it."

"Now thus having met with the true way, and walked with the Lord therein, wherein daily certainty, yea, and full assurance of faith and of understanding is at length obtained, I cannot be silent (true love and pure life stirring in me and moving me) but am necessitated to testify of it to others; and this is it,—To retire inwardly, and wait to feel somewhat of the Lord, somewhat of his holy Spirit and power, discovering, and drawing from that which is contrary to Him, and into

his holy nature and heavenly image. And then, as the mind is joined to this, somewhat is received, some true life, some true light, some true discerning; which the creature not exceeding, (but abiding in the measure of) is safe. But it is easy erring from this, but hard abiding with it, and not going before its leadings. But he that feels life, and begins in life, doth he not begin safely? And he that waits and fears, and goes on no further than his captain goes before him, doth he not proceed safely: Yea, very safely, even till he cometh to be so settled and established in the virtue, demonstration, and power of Truth, as nothing can prevail to shake Him."

"Now, blessed be the Lord, there are many at this day who can truly and faithfully witness, that they have been brought by the Lord to this state. And thus have we learned of the Lord; to wit, not by the high striving, aspiring mind: but by lying low, and being contented with a little. If but a crumb of bread (yet if bread), if but a drop of water (yet if water), we have been contented with it, and also thankful to the Lord for it; nor by thoughtfulness, and wise searching and deep considering with our own wisdom and reason have we obtained it; but in the still, meek, and humble waiting, have we found that brought into the death, which is not to know the mysteries of God's kingdom; and that which is to live, made alive, and increase in life."

"Therefore he that would truly know the Lord, let him take heed of his own reason and understanding. I tried this way very far, for I considered most seriously and uprightly. I prayed, I read the scriptures, I earnestly desired to understand and find out whether that which this people, called Quakers, testified of, was the only way and truth of God (as they seemed to me but to pretend): but for all this, prejudices multiplied upon me, and strong reasonings against them, which appeared to me as unanswerable. But when the Lord revealed his Seed in me, and touched my heart there-

with, which administered true life and virtue to me, I presently felt them there the children of the Most High, and so grown up in his life, power, and holy dominion, (as the inward eye, being opened by the Lord, sees), as drew forth from me great reverence of heart, and praises to the Lord, who had so appeared among men in these latter days."

"And as God draweth, in any respect, oh? give up in faithfulness to Him. Despise the shame, take up the cross: for indeed it is a way which is very cross to man, and which his wisdom will exceedingly be ashamed of: but that must be denied and turned from, and the secret, sensible drawings of God's Spirit waited for and given up to. Mind, people, He that will come into the new covenant, must come into the obedience of it. The light of life, which God hath hid in the heart, is the covenant; and from this covenant God doth not give knowledge, to satisfy the vast, aspiring, comprehending wisdom of man; but living knowledge, to feed that which is quickened by Him; which knowledge is given in the obedience, and is very sweet and precious to the state of him that knows how to feed upon it. Yea, truly, this is of a very excellent, pure, precious nature; and a little of it weighs down that great, vast knowledge in the comprehending part, which the man's spirit and nature so much prizeth and presseth after."

"And truly, friends, I witness at this day a great difference between the sweetness of comprehending the knowledge of things as expressed in the scriptures, (this I fed much on formerly); and tasting the hidden life, the hidden manna in the heart (which is my food now, blessed forever be the Lord my God and Saviour). Oh! that others had a true, certain and sensible taste of the life, virtue, and goodness of the Lord, as it is revealed there. Surely it could not but kindle the true hunger; and inflame the true thirst; which can never be satisfied but by the true bread, and by water from the living fountain. This the Lord (in the tenderness of

his love, and in the riches of his grace and mercy) hath brought us to; and this we earnestly and uprightly desire and endeavour, that others may be brought to also; that they may rightly (in the true silence of the flesh, and in the pure stillness of spirit) wait for, and in the Lord's due time receive, that which answers the desire of the awakened mind and soul, and satisfies it with the true, precious substance for evermore. Amen."*

More to the import of the three preceding pieces may be seen in the preface to Isaac Penington's tract, entitled "Babylon the Great described," published in 1659, and in another tract the following year respecting the New England persecution, both of which are reprinted in his works. It may not be advisable to insert them here at length; yet an extract from the latter will sum up the evidence already produced, and show him in an amiable view.

"At first acquaintance with this rejected people, that which was eternal of God in me opened, and I did immediately in my spirit own them as children of my Father, truly begotten of his life by his own Spirit. But the wise, reasoning part presently rose up, contending against their uncouth way of appearance; and in that I did disown them, and continued a stranger to them, and a reasoner against them, for about twelve months; and by weighing and considering things in that part, was still further and further off from discerning their leadings by the life and Spirit of God into those things. But at length it pleased the Lord to draw out his sword against that part in me, turning the wisdom and strength thereof backward; and to open that eye in me again, wherewith he had given me to see the things of his kingdom in some measure from a child. And then I saw and felt them grown in that life and Spirit, which I, through the treachery of the fleshly-wise part, had been estranged to, and had adulterated

* Penington's Works, vol. ii. p. 49.

from. And now, what bitter days of mourning and lamentation (even for some years since), I have had over this, the Lord alone fully knows. Oh! I have known it to be a bitter thing to follow this wisdom, in understanding of scriptures, in remembering of scriptures, in remembering of experiences, and in many more inward ways of workings that many cannot bear to hear."

"The Lord hath judged me for that, and I have borne the burden and condemnation of that, which many at this day wear as their crown. And now, what am I at length? A poor worm! Whom can I warn effectually? Whom can I help? Whom can I stop from running into the pit? But though I am nothing, I must speak, for the Lord draweth and moveth me; and how unserviceable soever my pity be, yet my bowels cannot but roll, both towards those that are in misery, and those that are running into misery."*

And here we may pause; and, having, by the medium of his own declaration, surveyed the state of Isaac Penington's mind, we scarcely need hesitate to acknowledge that he had attained in no small degree to the possession of the grand qualifications of a Christian. "Now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love."† Even in his political character, in which men otherwise amiable, are too apt to give way to animosity and rancour: even in this, and at a time when he had not so deeply penetrated the mysteries of the Christian religion, we have seen him invested with its spirit of forbearance and good-will.

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* Vol. i. p. cclvi.

† I have sometimes wondered why the same word (ἀγάπη) which in the apostle John's writings is by our translators rendered *love*, should in Paul's be translated *charity*. It doubtless conveys to some readers the idea of almsgiving. Let any one read the 13th chap. of 1st to Corinthians, substituting the word *love* for *charity*, and he will probably see the superior aptness of the term; and be almost ready to think that Love is not only the perfection of the Law, but of the Gospel also.

CHAP. II.

Account of Mary Penington—her desire to be able to perform true prayer—her written, and extemporaneous prayer—marries Col. Springett—her husband's death—refuses to have her child sprinkled—seeks solitude, for prayer—yet attends diversions—a dream—her habit of trust—cannot pray—another remarkable dream—her marriage to I. Penington, and its motives—some previous knowledge of Friends—her state of mind when Curtis and Simpson visited the family—her conflicts—her joy at the first meeting held in I. Penington's house—further account of her spiritual state.

Before we proceed to investigate the further operation of religion on the conduct of Isaac Penington, by collecting the few and scattered accounts of the scenes in which he was engaged, scenes, for the greater part, of suffering, it may be desirable to trace a few of the steps by which his faithful companion arrived at her qualifications to be his help-meet.

Mary Penington also had been religiously inclined from her childhood, and had been brought up in a family in which the forms, at least, of religion were observed with great strictness. While yet a child she was one day much struck with hearing a sermon read, on the text, "Pray continually." The writer, among other benefits of prayer, had observed that it was an exercise in which the saints were distinguished from the world; for, though the world could in many things hypocritically imitate them, yet in prayer it could not. This forcibly wrought on her mind, for she knew that the printed prayers which she used, were such as the world also could use; and she therefore, with sorrow, concluded herself to be yet unacquainted with true prayer. When the reader had finished, and she was left alone in the room, she threw herself on the bed, crying out aloud, Lord, what is prayer? At this time,

she had not long learned to write, and could scarcely join her letters; but, having heard that some persons wrote prayers for their own use, she penned one to serve her as a morning supplication. The subject of it was, that "as the Lord had commanded the Israelites to offer up a morning sacrifice, so she offered the sacrifice of prayer, and desired preservation for the day." She rested a while in this practice, and wrote two other prayers: but doubt crept in here also; and she began to think true prayer was extemporaneous. Extemporaneous prayer, therefore, she attempted, but found that she could not always pray. Sometimes she kneeled long, but could not utter a word. At length one day, she heard of the sentence* of Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, three eminent sufferers in the persecution under Archbishop Laud, in the reign of Charles I. The sad relation of the lot of these men sunk deep into her mind, and cries were raised in her for them and all the innocent people in the nation. She went into a private room, and shutting the door, poured out her soul to the Lord (they are her own words) in a vehement manner for a considerable time, being wonderfully melted. In

* This seems to have been the second sentence on those persecuted men, in the year 1637. Prynne, for writing a book, entitled *Histriomastix* against Plays, Masques, Dancing, &c. was condemned by the Court of Star-Chamber to be degraded from his profession of the law, to be pilloried at Westminster and in Cheapside, at each place to lose an ear, to be fined £5000., and to suffer perpetual imprisonment. Bastwick, a physician, for writing a book called *Elenchus religionis papisticæ*, with an appendix called *Flagellum pontificis et episcoporum Latialium*, was degraded, excommunicated, fined £1000., and imprisoned till he should recant. Burton, a parish priest in London, having published two sermons against the late innovations, was committed a close prisoner to the *Gatehouse*. In 1637, all three were again cited to the *Star-Chamber* for writing as was alleged, in prison, seditious, schismatical, and libellous books. They were then condemned to have their ears cut off, each fined £5000., and each ordered to perpetual imprisonment. Prynne had the additional sentence of stigmatizing on both cheeks, and the court took care he should again suffer the pain of amputation, by ordering the *remainder of his stumps* to be cut off. Abp. Laud was present at passing the sentence. Neal, Hist. Purit. Vol. 2.

this, she felt ease, peace, and acceptance, knowing assuredly that this was true prayer.

Soon after this she entirely refused to join in the common prayer read in the family, or to kneel in the place of public worship; but went on foot two or three miles, regardless of weather, to hear a puritan minister, who prayed extempore. About this time also she avoided vain company, declined the use of cards and similar amusements, was strict in observance of what was termed the Sabbath, and would not even eat on that day such things as took up much time to prepare.

As she advanced in life she rejected several offers of marriage, on account of the want of religion which she perceived in her suitors; and at length married a young man of respectable family named Springett; intent, like herself, to avoid superstition in religion, and one whom long acquaintance had proved worthy of her acquaintance. She did not live long with her first husband, who, being a colonel of foot in the parliament army, died of a calenture at his quarters near Arundel. Mary Springett was with child, at the time of her husband's death, of her daughter Gulielma Maria, afterwards the wife of William Penn, and on her birth the usual ceremony of what passes for baptism, appeared so objectionable, that she refused to suffer the infant to be sprinkled: which brought some reproach on her, and made her as a by-word among people of her own rank. Her relations also and acquaintance sent such as were accounted able ministers, and such as she had formerly delighted to hear, to persuade her to comply; but they sent in vain.

Thus she stood her ground against that which appeared formal; but not being herself fully settled in religious opinion, she swerved from simplicity, roved from one notion to another, and finding no assurance in any, at length gave over her religious exercises. "Indeed," she says of herself, "I left them not in a loose mind, as some judged; for had I found that I did perform what

the Lord required of me—I should gladly have continued in them, being zealously affected this way, in fasting often, in private prayer very frequent, rarely less than three times a day, many times oftener, a daily hearer of sermons upon all occasions, both lectures, fasts, and thanksgivings. Most of the day was spent in reading the scriptures, or in praying, hearing, and such like, —and so great was my delight in these things, that while I believed it my duty, I have many times in the day sought solitary places to pray in, as gardens, fields, and out-houses, when I could not be private in the house,— for so vehement was my spirit, that I could not forbear being loud and earnest in pouring out my soul."

Thus, after her long research, and zeal in whatsoever the professors of the day recommended, she did not find in herself that real change of heart which she aspired after, nor acceptance with the Lord. She therefore began to conclude, that although the Lord and his Truth were unchangeable, yet it was not in her day made known to any on the earth. And for some time she gave no attention to religion; but devoted herself to the diversions and pleasures of the world, both in public and private. But in the midst of such pursuits her heart was still sad; and she would often retire from all company for several days together. Indeed her mind was not captivated by the dissipating amusements of the age; for she would often say within herself, of the career in which she had engaged, "What is all this to me? I could easily leave those things. They have not my heart. My delight is not in them. I had rather serve the Lord, if indeed I could feel that which performeth acceptably to him." About this time, having retired into the country with her daughter and a maid, she went to bed one night very sad and disconsolate, through her deep conflict of mind respecting religion. She dreamed that she saw a book of hieroglyphics of religious things, or of a state that was to come in the church; but she thought that she had no delight in them, though they were magnified by those who show-

ed them; but she turned from them greatly oppressed, and going apart into a yard sorrowing, and lifting up her eyes to heaven, she cried out, Lord, suffer me no more to fall into false ways, but show me thy Truth. Immediately the sky seemed to open, and bright light, like fire, to fall on her hand. She cried aloud and awoke, and the maid coming at her cries, found her trembling.

Notwithstanding the state of uncertainty and sorrow, she so long experienced (Oh! saith my soul, that the *actual* uncertainty which thousands are in, about the welfare of their souls, might induce them to be sorrowful also), she had learned in outward matters to be careful for nothing, but in all things, as saith the apostle, to let her requests be made known to God. And she frequently received help; and a confidence in the Lord was given to her in that day, when she durst not own herself to have any religion that could be called true. "If," says she, "I was to take a servant, to remove to any place, or do any thing that concerned my outward affairs, I never contrived, but retired to see what the day would bring forth, and waited in a firm belief that such things would be offered me as I should embrace: so that I was not anxious about any worldly accommodation; but as things presented, I closed in with them, if I felt my heart answer: but in things of everlasting concern continually hurried and dissatisfied." For some years she durst not kneel down, or go to prayer, because she thought she could not call God Father, in truth, and she feared to mock Him by formal devotion. Sometimes she was melted into tenderness and tears, but not knowing whence it came, and being ready to condemn all appearances of religion, she concluded herself under planetary influence, and that one planet made her tender, and another hardened her. She ventured not to suppose that she felt any influence of God's Spirit on her heart; although so great was her thirst after it, that she seemed to herself to resemble the parched heath, or the hunted hart panting

for water. In this state another remarkable dream was her lot, a part of which in her own words is as follows: "I one night dreamt that as I was sitting in a room alone, retired and sad, I heard a very loud noise, some screaming, yelling, and roaring in a doleful manner; some casting up their caps, and hallooing in way of triumph and joy. And as I listened to learn what was the cause, I thought that Christ was come, and that this was the different state of the people at his coming; some in joy, and some in extreme sorrow and amazement. Thus I waited in much dread, for uncertainty about this thing. At last I found that neither the joy nor the sorrow of this confused multitude did arise from a certain knowledge of his coming, but it was the effect of a false rumour. So I abode in the room solitary, for I found I was not to join with either, but to wait in the stillness, and not to go forth to inquire concerning the tumult of the multitude. While I sat thus, all was whist, and it was manifest to me that they were mistaken. So I remained cool and low in my mind, until one came and said in a low voice, Christ is come indeed, and is in the next room, and with the Lamb's wife. At which my heart secretly leaped within me, and I was in haste to go, and express my love to Him, and joy at his coming. But I was rebuked for my haste and instructed to be sober, and come cool and softly into the next room: which I did. Then I came into a spacious hall, but stood at the bottom, trembling: for though I was joyed at the thing, yet I durst not go near him; for it was said in me, Stay, and see whether He owns thee, and takes thee to be such as thou takest thyself to be. Christ stood at the upper end of the hall in the appearance of a fresh, lovely youth, clad, in grey cloth, very neat and plain (at this time I had not heard of a Quaker; or their garb). He was of a sweet, affable, courteous carriage; and I saw him embrace several poor, old, simple persons, whose appearance was very contemptible and mean, without wisdom or beauty; from which I judged that his wisdom and discretion was great, that

He can, thought I, behold the hidden worth of these people, who to me appeared so unlovely and simple. At last He beckoned to me to come to Him, at which I was very glad, but went lowly, and trembling, in much solidity, and weightiness of spirit. Then I beheld a beautiful young virgin, slender, modest, and grave, in plain apparel, becoming and graceful, and her image was fully answering his, as a brother and sister."*

Before the termination of the state of conflict, which she had sustained so long, Mary Springett was married to Isaac Penington. Her regard was attracted to him, because, as has been hinted, she perceived that he had discovered the deceit of all mere notions: that, like herself, he refused to be comforted by any form of religion, and was unwilling to rest satisfied short of a heart-felt experience of the power. In this concern they united, and on her part there was a sincere desire to to be serviceable to him, in his disconsolate condition. Thus they lived together, until the visit from the stranger already mentioned. But previously to this, Mary Penington had heard of a people which had lately arisen in the North, and were called Quakers. Consistently, however, with her plan of doubting all professions, she resolved not to inquire after them or their principles; so that it was a year or more before she knew any thing of them, except that they used the singular number in speaking to a single person. She had also seen a book of George Fox written in the plain style, which she accounted ridiculous; and she had likewise heard some false and calumnious reports. She held this people therefore in contempt; nevertheless she often had a secret desire to be with them when they prayed. The reader may recollect that to be acquainted with

* Three things are remarkable in this dream, and particularly so in one of a person whose future allotment was with Friends. The stillness proper for coming to Christ, his simplicity of appearance, and the strict resemblance which the virgin (the Church) bore to him.

the genuine spirit of prayer, was one of her earliest desires; and she now thought that if she were present in the time of prayer, she could feel whether they were of the Lord or not. But she forbore to gratify this inclination, because she knew not how to attend their meetings undiscovered; and if it should be known, she feared that it would be reported, she was inclined to their way, while she herself had no such intention.

It has been already mentioned that Mary Penington has left some account of the particulars, so far at least as they affected herself, of the conference with Thomas Curtis and William Simpson. Her own words will best delineate the situation of her mind at that juncture. "My mind," says she, "was somewhat affected with the man who had discoursed" [with] "us the night before (that is, the man who had spoken to her husband and herself over the park pales); for though I judged him weak in managing what he pretended to, yet he mentioned many weighty scriptures, which dwelt with me, proving from them many things to be right, which I was not in the practice of; and others to be wrong, which I was practising; and indeed it made me very serious, and quite disposed to hear with attention what these men" (Curtis and Simpson) "should say. Their weighty and solid carriage brought a dread over me, for they came in the authority and power of the Lord: insomuch that all that were in the room were sensible of the Lord's power manifested in them. Thomas Curtis mentioned this scripture, which at once stopped all my inquiries and objections. 'He that doeth my will shall know of my doctrine whether it be of God.'* It immediately arose in my mind, if I will know whether this is the truth which they have spoken, I must do whatsoever is manifested

* This is not correctly quoted. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John, vii. 16, 17.

to be the will of God. And what was contrary to the Lord in me was clearly set before me, and I saw that it must be removed before I could be capable of judging rightly of their principles. This wrought much in me, to obey what I knew was my present business. I now found that my vain inclinations and propensities were much stronger than I imagined, and that those things which I thought I had treated with indifference, had yet great power over me. Terrible was the day of the Lord against all my vain and evil imaginations. This made me continually cry out and mourn, both day and night: and if I did cease a little, then I was, on the other hand, distressed with fears, lest I should be again reconciled to those things which I felt the judgment of God was upon, and which I had a detestation of. Then I cried to the Lord that I might not be left in a quiet and secure state, till all the evil that lodged in my heart was wrought out. Many times hath this scripture been revived in my remembrance, 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.' Then was the sense of my own unwillingness to bear the cross of Christ so strongly impressed on my mind, that I was ready to say, It is true I am undone if I come not unto thee: but I will not come, for if I do, I must leave that which cleaveth close to me, and I cannot part with it."——— "I clearly saw my unwillingness to forsake my beloved lusts that I might come unto Him for life; but still upon every painful conflict this was in my mind, That although such severe discipline seemed more than I could bear, yet that the wrath of God was greater, and would be more intolerable. I set myself against taking up the cross to the language, fashions, customs, and honours of the world; for indeed my station and connections in life made it very hard: but I never had peace or quiet in my mind till the Lord, by the stroke of his judgments, brought me off from all these things, which I found the light to manifest deceit and bondage in. Yet thus to become a fool, and lose my reputation in the world, cost me many tears, many wakeful nights

and sorrowful days; but as I at length gave up, and laid aside my reasonings with flesh and blood, I received strength and went to the meetings of those people" (Quakers) "and found them truly of God. And my heart honoured them, and longed to be one of them; judging it worth my cost and pains, if I could witness such a change as I saw in them, and such a power over their corruptions."———"As I continued to take up the cross, I received strength against many things that I had not thought possible to deny."—"But O! the joy that filled my soul at the first meeting we had at our then habitation at Chalfont, which I still retain a fresh and living sense of, *That the Lord had given me to live, and worship Him in that Spirit that was undoubtedly his own, that I needed not to put a stop to my spirit in it; but swim in the life and give up my own strength to that which then melted and overcame me.* O how long, and how earnestly had I desired thus to worship God, in full assurance of acceptance, and lift up my hands without doubting! That day, and in the assembly, my spirit acknowledged to the Lord the greatness, and wonderfulness of his rich mercy: and I was enabled to say, *This is what I have waited for;* though I feared I never should have seen that which the Lord owned and witnessed his blessed acceptance in assembling together.

"Many are the trials I have met with; but as they came by the Lord's ordering, they have not hurt me, but rather tended to strengthen me in the divine life. Once my mind sustained great hurt by running out into prejudice against some friends; nevertheless, after a time of deep and unknown sorrow, the Lord removed this thing, gave me a clearness in his sight, and restored me to love and acceptance with his beloved ones. And he hath many times refreshed my soul in his presence, and given me an assurance that I knew that state, in which he would never leave me, nor suffer me to be drawn from him. And though infirmities beset me; yet my heart cleaveth to the Lord, in the bond of

everlasting love which cannot be broken; and his divine strength supports me. Being sensible of my infirmities I bemoan myself unto Him, feeling that faith which gives victory, and keeps me low in a sense of my own weakness; yet quickens me in a lively hope of seeing satan trodden under my feet, by the grace of God, which is all-sufficient. For I feel and know where my help lieth; and when I slip in word or thought, I know my advocate; and, having recourse to him, feel pardon and healing: going on to overcome, watching against that which easily besets me. And I do believe the enemy cannot prevail over me; although he is suffered to prove me, that I might keep continually on the watch, and place my whole dependence on the Lord, who only can make war with the dragon. And by this discovery of my own weakness, I am also taught to be tender of the tempted. Sweet is this state, though low: for in it I receive my daily bread, which is given of the Lord; for I cannot live to him, but as he breatheth the breath of life upon me every moment."

CHAP. III.

Reproaches and insults bestowed on I. and M. Penington—extract of a letter to his father—a visit from the family of Ellwood—the alteration in that of I. P.—its effects—a second visit at which the younger Ellwood is convinced—M. Penington pleads for him with his father, and takes him to Chalfont. First imprisonment of Isaac Penington—his letter from prison to T. Ellwood—the manner of his confinement—his employment—his piece "Concerning the Magistrate's protection of the innocent"—release—apprehended again but not imprisoned—is the means of introducing Ellwood, as reader, to Milton—engages him as tutor to his children—some extracts from his writings—second imprisonment—third imprisonment, having been taken into custody whilst attending the burial of a Friend—his cheerfulness in prison—release—fourth imprisonment—plague in the jail—released—soon imprisoned a fifth time—his letter to the Earl of Bridgewater—his health impaired—his release—letter to a Friend—to George Fox—to Friends of Amersham.

On the change thus wrought in the outward demeanor, as well as in the inward principles, of this pious pair, they had to endure many cruel reproaches from their relations, acquaintance, neighbours, and even from their servants. They became, to use the strong phrase of scripture, "a wagging of the head," and were accounted as fools, mad, or bewitched. They were even stoned and abused, in towns whither they went to attend meetings; and this too, at a time when the nation was enjoying, (or rather rioting in) that liberty of conscience which had been so much restrained in the reign of Charles I. and by the power of his persecuting prelates.

The few particulars of the domestic economy of Isaac Penington, and of his sufferings on account of his new

profession, not obtained from the manuscript of his wife, from which the sketch of her conversion has been drawn, are chiefly to be found in the journal of Thomas Ellwood (a work remarkable for its lively narration, which almost depicts as well as describes); and in the testimony of the same Friend to the memory of Penington, prefixed to the collection of his works. There is, however, in a manuscript collection of the letters of Isaac Penington, taken from a larger collection copied out by his son, one written not far from the time of his joining with the Society of Friends, namely, in the year 1658, and addressed to the alderman his father. From this I propose to make a copious extract, seeing so far as it shews the kind of opposition, which he met with, from a parent whom he appears to have tenderly loved, it may be considered as a part of his history.

"Ah! dear father,

"Why dost thou so often give me occasion of mourning before the Lord, of hard and unrighteous charges from thee? How often have I solemnly professed that there never was any desire in me, nor endeavours used by me, to draw my father into *this way!* which my father will not equally consider; but will have his own apprehension go for granted! All that is in my soul is this, that my father might have the true knowledge of Christ, and not set up another thing in the stead of it." ——— he amplifies this wish, which I abbreviate, "My father lays down three reasons why he cannot believe this *way* to be of God."

"1. *God's way is a way of love, peace, and unity.*"

"Answer. If my father had that eye which can see the things of God, and did apply himself to look therewith, he might see that peace, that love, that unity, among this people, which other men do but talk of; but if he take things by the report of the enemies both to God and them, he shall be sure to hear and believe bad enough. They have no war with any thing but

unrighteousness; and with that they cannot have peace, no, not in their dearest relations. They love the souls of their enemies, and think no pains or hazard too great for the saving of them. Being persecuted, they bless; being reviled, they entreat, and pray for their persecutors. They are at unity with whatever is of God; but with the seed of the serpent, they cannot be at unity—for the spirit of the scribes and pharisees is now in the world; and the spirit of Christ and his apostles is also in the world; and they cannot but fight, each with their [its] proper weapons; the one with stocks, whips, fines, prisons, &c.: the other with the spiritual armour of Christ. Thus the one of these wrestles with flesh and blood, fights with the creature, hurts that; the other loves the creature, seeks the saving of it, and fights only with the power of darkness, which rules the creature."

"And this peace, this love, this unity, they attain, not by their own strivings after it, but by receiving it from above. Indeed all our religion lies in receiving a gift: without which, we are nothing, and can do nothing: and in which, nothing is too hard for us."

"2. *God's way is a way of humility.*"

"Answer. If they had not been broken and humbled by God, they could never have entered into this way; which is that which the lofty, fleshly part abhors. Nor is this a voluntary humility: but a humility which crosseth and breaketh the will all the day long."

"3. *That God is a God of order, not of confusion.*"

"Answer. Blessed be the Lord, who hath recovered some of the true churches' order for us; and delivered out of the confusion of antichrist. We know order in the light, order in the Spirit, order in Christ, the truth: but that which man in his wisdom, calls order, is but antichrist's order, which, with God, is confusion. To have man's spirit speak and God's Spirit stopt, this is the order of all the antichristian congregations and churches; but to have man's spirit stopt and God's Spi-

rit speak, this is the order of Christ's church; and this order we know, and rejoice in."

"My father doth not believe *that Mr. Gurden* (as the world calls him), *or any other godly man, doth persecute them for their consciences.*"

"Answer. I know no godly man can persecute. The lamb never did worry the wolf. But the grossest persons [qu. if not originally *persecutors*] will not acknowledge that they persecute for conscience: but accuse those whom they persecute, for evil-doers, and say they suffer as evil doers. Cannot my father see the narrowness of this covering?—Would the Scribes, and Pharisees, and zealous among the Jews, confess that they put Christ and Stephen to death for conscience? The eye of that spirit is as blind now as it was then: it cannot see its own deceit."

"The last part of the letter consists of very harsh and unrighteous charges, mixed with bitter expressions, which I shall pass over—only I confess it is somewhat hard *to one part of me*, that my own father should deal thus with me."

"About having comfort in me, and wishing me more comfort in my son, I must needs say this. There is a part which God hath struck at, and is destroying, and I have no comfort here, and that is able to yield little comfort to any one else.—If I were in any formal way of religion, I might be a comfort to my father, (for he could be gratified with that, or at least bear with that); but because the Lord hath seized upon my heart by the power of his Truth, and I can bow to none but him, (no, not to my most dear father), now I am no comfort. I am sure I have had little comfort all my days, in seeing my father's course of religion, which I ever could testify of, as not being of God (yea, my late dear mother would often bewail it to me); and many times have I poured out my soul before the Lord.—Yet hear my words, O my father, hear my words. O! pierce into the nature of things. Set not up shadows instead of the truth. Wait for the gift. Receive the true

love, the true peace, the true unity, the true humility, (which lies not in the will, but destroys the will), and we shall soon know one another, and have comfort in one another."

"14th of 12th Month, 1658."

Thomas Ellwood relates that he accompanied his father on a visit to Isaac and Mary Penington, soon after the alteration in their manners, when they lived on their own estate at Chalfont. The commencement of the acquaintance had been some years before, when the elder Ellwood had contracted a friendship with Mary, then called Lady Springett. It had afterwards continued with both her and Isaac Penington; and this visit seems to have been the first, since they had come to reside in Buckinghamshire. The visitors were much surprised, on their arrival, to find that their friends were no longer the courtly persons they had known them to be; but had become Quakers, a people of which the Ellwoods had no knowledge, and a name of which they had before scarcely heard. Their reception was with so strict a gravity, as disappointed their expectations of the pleasant visit that they had promised to themselves; and as there were other visitors in the house, they found no opportunity of endeavouring to gratify their curiosity, by inquiring the occasion of the change. Mary Penington's daughter Gulielma had also embraced the profession of Friends; and Thomas Ellwood, who had been acquainted with her from childhood, and had been her play-fellow at that age, endeavoured to engage her as usual in familiar conversation. But the gravity of her deportment, though her behaviour to him was still courteous, perplexed him, struck a kind of awe upon him, and induced him to retire with some confusion of mind. When dinner was served, it was still what is termed very handsome, and wanted nothing to recommend it but mirth and free conversation; which the visitors could not have with their serious entertainers, nor, because of them, with each other. The

weightiness which was on the spirits, and appeared on the countenances of the friends, kept down the levity of their visitors. Yet Isaac Penington was far, if we may trust his writings, from being a morose man. But levity is hostile to true religion, and the man who has found and purchased the *pearl*, does not want the trifling joy of convivial gaiety.

But the visit, though it turned out so different to expectation, seems to have had the effect of rendering the elder visitor, who was then in the commission of the peace, less prejudiced against Friends, when they came in his way. This he soon after evinced, by releasing a young man, who had been apprehended for speaking a few words to a priest, after the sermon and prayers were ended, at an adjacent village.

It was not very long before the family of Ellwood made another visit at Chalfont. They staid several days, and attended a meeting in the neighbourhood with the family, at which Thomas Ellwood was convinced; but, as it is not the object of this work to write the history of this Friend, who has himself done it so ably and agreeably, the visit is chiefly mentioned to show the practice of Isaac Penington: namely, in the long evenings of winter, to call in the servants who were Friends, and to sit together in silence. At least this was done at the period of the visit in question.

It is natural, for there is that which may be called the nature of spiritual things, it is natural for the humble mind which has long endured conflict, and has been brought through it, not by any inherent strength of its own, to pity those who are still sustaining the warfare; and to be greatly desirous of stretching out to them the hand of support. Thus it was with Mary Penington. In a visit at the house of Ellwood she observed the sufferings of the son from the temper of the father, on the occasion of remaining covered before him. She remembered what her husband had suffered from his own father, on a like account; and she also remembered that the relation of it to her friend Ellwood had drawn from

him, at a time when he did not expect it to be his own case, a heavy censure on the alderman. She had therefore the opportunity of offering some arguments on behalf of the son, not easily to be evaded by the father. Added to this intercession, she desired and obtained the father's permission, that young Ellwood should return with her and her husband in the coach, and remain with them awhile at Chalfont. Great indeed was the love and the kindness of Isaac and Mary Penington to Thomas Ellwood, while he remained in the family. They were as affectionate parents to him, and as tender nurses in his state of religious childhood. Besides their seasonable counsels, and exemplary conversation, they furnished him with the means of going to other meetings of Friends in the country, when no meeting was held at their house. And Thomas Ellwood asserts that the time he passed in their company was so well spent, that it not only afforded him great satisfaction to his mind, but in good measure turned to his spiritual advantage in the truth. If the woe be attached to those who offend the little ones that believe; surely the blessing will rest on the heads of such as, through their love to the Lord, are sedulous to comfort them.

Hitherto Isaac Penington had escaped what may be termed judicial suffering. It is possible, the rank his father, the alderman, held in the republic might have its share in procuring him this exemption. But on the restoration of Charles II. such a motive had it ever existed, would fail to operate; and the frantic insurrection of the Fifth-monarchy men soon gave the spirit of persecution a pretext for harrassing the dissenters. The first notice we have of any imprisonment of Isaac Penington is in the Account of Friends' sufferings, in 8vo.*: where, under the head Buckinghamshire, in the year 1660, it is briefly said that "Five, namely, Isaac Penington, George Salter, Thomas Pewsey, William

* An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers, &c. 1738, vol. ii.

Sexton, and Edward Barton, were apprehended by the constables when together, and sent to prison for such meeting." The prison was the county goal at Aylesbury, in which we find them remaining on the 30th 11th month (answering to that called January) 1660; together with sixty two others who were chiefly committed for refusing to swear the oath of allegiance; but who had for the more part, been taken up when meeting peaceably together. There is a short letter which Isaac Penington wrote during this imprisonment to his young friend Ellwood, then also in confinement at Oxford. It may serve in this place as a specimen of Isaac Penington's mind in the estimating of sufferings, and of the unabated care and affection which he bore to Thomas Ellwood.

"Dear Thomas,

"Great hath been the Lord's goodness to thee in calling thee out of that path of vanity, and death, wherein thou wast running toward destruction; to give thee a living name, and an inheritance of life, among his people; which certainly will be the end of thy faith in Him, and obedience to Him. And let it not be a light thing in thine eyes that He now accounteth thee worthy to suffer among his choice lambs, that he might make thy crown weightier, and thine inheritance the fuller. O that that eye and heart may be kept open in thee, which knoweth the value of these things! and that thou mayest be kept close to the feeling of the life, that thou mayest be fresh in thy spirit in the midst of thy sufferings, and mayest reap the benefit of them; finding that pared off thereby which hindereth the bubblings of the everlasting springs, and maketh unfit for the breaking forth and enjoyment of the pure power! This is the brief salutation of my dear love to thee, which desireth thy strength and settlement in the power; and the utter weakening of thee, as to thyself. My love is

to thee, with dear Thomas Goodyare, and the rest of the imprisoned Friends."

"I remain thine in the Truth, to which the Lord my God preserve me single and faithful.

"I. P."

"From Aylesbury Goal, 14th of 12th month, 1660."

Isaac Penington remained in prison a part of the following year; and from Ellwood, who having gained his liberty, sometimes visited him in prison, we learn some of the particulars of his treatment there; to estimate which rightly, it should be noticed that he was of a tender habit of body; and his education and manner of life had been those of a gentleman.

Most of the sixty-three prisoners were kept in an old room behind the goal, which had once been a malt-house, but, says Ellwood, then decayed, and scarcely fit for a dog-house. It was also so insecure, that the prisoners might have escaped; and it was, probably, the confidence placed in them, which procured for them this incommodious lodging. Isaac Penington, whether his lodging were in this or another room, for Ellwood in his testimony, calls it a cold and very incommodious room without a chimney, contracted so much disease, his durance being in winter, that for several weeks after he was unable to turn himself in bed. There is something animating in the cheerfulness with which our early friends underwent the rigours of confinement; of which, so far as relates to Isaac Penington, proof will be given as we proceed.

In this confinement he wrote his piece entitled, "Somewhat spoken to a weighty question, concerning the Magistrate's Protection of the Innocent; wherein is held forth the Blessing and Peace, which nations ought to wait for and embrace in the latter days," 4to., 2 sheets. To undertake an outline of Penington's tracts would be difficult, and yet I am inclined to give some

strokes of this, as it first falls in my way to notice. He pleads for an exemption from fighting, for such as are redeemed from the spirit of the world to the spirit of the gospel. "How can he fight with creatures in whom is love and good will towards those creatures; and whose bowels are rolling over them because of their wanderings in the lusts, in the strife, and in the wars?" Yet he asserts the duty of the magistrate to protect not only those who are unable through weakness, but such as are forbidden, by motives of gospel good-will, to fight for themselves. He thus obviates the fear some have had, that a nation of peaceful Christians would be invaded and ruined. Such a thing must have a beginning before it can be perfected. Whoever would see this lovely thing brought forth in the general, must cherish it in the particular. It is not for a nation coming into the gospel-principle to take care beforehand how it shall be preserved: but the Gospel will teach a nation, as well as a particular person to trust the Lord, and wait on Him for preservation. He condemns not, yea, he appears even to be too liberal in allowing, to the magistrate the use of the sword, in repelling invasion or rebellion: but he declares there is a better state, yea, saith he, it is far better to know the Lord to be the defender, and to wait on Him daily, than to be ever so strong and skilful in weapons of war. He instances the case of the Egyptians, of Sennacherib, and of the enemies of Israel, who were restrained, while Israel went to appear before the Lord. "Will he not," says Penington, "defend that nation whom He teacheth to leave off war?" The work has several divisions. In one of them he states what the Friends desire with reference to government. 1. Universal liberty for all sorts to worship, as Christ shall open men's eyes to see the truth. 2. That no laws contrary to equity may remain in force, nor any be made but agreeably to equity. There is also a lively address "To such as have felt the power of the endless life drawing; and have faithfully followed the Leader of the flock of

Israel," &c. This has the date of his prison-house. "From Aylesbury prison in Bucks, where my life breathes for the consolation and redemption of God's Israel, and for the turning of the captivity of the whole creation." The following prayer concludes the pamphlet.

"O God of love, who knowest the value and price of souls, pity thy poor creatures, and put a stop to this course of perishing, wherein so many multitudes are overtaken, and pass down to the pit unawares. O thy bowels, thy bowels, thy wonderful bowels! Let them roll in Thee, and work mightily, and, in the strength of thy compassions, bring forth thy judgment and thy mercy among the sons of men. Build up the tents of Sem: persuade Japhet to dwell therein: and let Canaan become a servant. Preserve the feet of thy saints for ever. Shut up and silence the wicked one in the darkness. Let not his strength or subtilty prevail against Thee or thine any more; but let the fresh power of thy life, and the virtue of thy incomprehensible love, redeem, fill, possess, and make glad the heart of thy creation for ever. Amen. Amen."

After Isaac Penington was discharged from this imprisonment, he went again to reside at his house at Chalfont, in which there was generally held a meeting twice in the week; but one First-day in four, there was a more general meeting, to which most of the Friends of the neighbouring meetings usually resorted.

At one of these general meetings were present, bessdes the neighbouring Friends, a brother of Isaac Penington, named William, who was a merchant of London, and with him a Friend of Essex: there was also the noted George Whitehead of Westmoreland, a man inured to suffering, Thomas Ellwood, and one John Ovy, a baptist teacher, who had desired to become acquainted with Isaac Penington. These came on the preceding day, and were entertained in his hospitable mansion. The meeting had not long been gathered, and was sitting in great stillness and composure, when a

party of horse made its appearance, and the two Peningtons, the Essex Friend, George Whitehead, Thomas Ellwood, and three or four more were taken into custody, and immediately conveyed to a magistrate who resided at a considerable distance. The remainder held their meeting without further molestation.

This seems to have been an arrest made conformably to a proclamation forbidding the meetings of dissenters; which had been issued in consequence of the rising of the Fifth monarchy men; but neither the commander of the soldiers, Matthew Archdale of Wycomb, nor the magistrate, William Boyer of Denhem, appear to have been inclined to persecution. One showed his lenity by apprehending so few; the other by finding, or contriving, means for discharging those few. He considered Isaac Penington as but at home in his own house; his brother and the Essex man, as naturally on a visit, and the neighbouring Friends as persons whom he could easily send for. These therefore he dismissed; but he could find no such excuse for Ellwood and Whitehead, whom therefore he threatened to commit; but at length suffered them, as it was too late in the day to send them to Aylesbury, to return home with Isaac Penington, on promise of being ready at his house in the morning; when he took care not to send for them, or molest them any more.

It was not long after this event that Isaac Penington found means to introduce Ellwood as a reader to the poet Milton, who had then lost his sight: which circumstance is probably interesting to the literary world, as Ellwood was the cause of his writing the poem called Paradise Regained. This fixed Ellwood in London, by which means in the year 1662, he underwent imprisonment both in Bridewell and Newgate; and after his release became Latin tutor to the children of Isaac Penington. Penington was esteemed curious and skilful in pronunciation, and was very desirous to have his children well grounded in their native tongue. For this purpose he had procured for them a very accurate

teacher, who performed his office to the satisfaction of his employer: but as he aimed no higher, and a successor more learned had not yet been found, Isaac Penington, who then being in ill health kept his chamber, requested Ellwood to enter his children in the rudiments of Latin. He complied; but, instead of a temporary, became a permanent tutor, and staid near seven years in the family.

From the time of Isaac Penington's release in the early part of 1661, it doth not appear that he was molested on account of his religious principles, until the year 1664; but though he himself was at liberty, he did not forget his fellow-prisoners whom he had left, or who had since his release been committed to prison at Aylesbury; for in the 7th month of the year 1661, he went to visit them in their confinement; and whilst with them, wrote the following letter to king Charles II.

"O King,

"The Lord God of heaven and earth is mighty, who hath often and greatly shaken this nation already; and this I have observed, that the seeming settlements, which hitherto have been, since the Lord began to shake, have been but preparative to a further shaking and dissettling. O! happy wert thou, if thou couldst wait for, and receive, such a guidance from God, as that thy government might be so pure, peaceable, and righteous, as it might need no further shaking by his hand. God sometime raiseth man from a low estate, and exalteth him; but if he forget the Lord, and his heart be lifted up, he is able to bring him down again. O! fear the Lord in the days of thy prosperity, and let thy heart be abased before Him, and sensible of the need of his preservation. Indeed, it is a hard matter to govern these kingdoms aright, as the state now stands. Thou mayst easily err and dash upon the rocks. O that the pure eye were open in thee; whereby thou mightest see that as thou didst not gain these

kingdoms by policy or strength; so neither canst thou retain them by those means, but only by the good pleasure of Him who hath all the earth at his dispose! I beseech thee, in that tender love I bear to thee, take heed of going about to plant what the Lord hath plucked up; or of endeavouring to pluck up what the Lord hath planted. If thou lookest with man's eye, thou canst not see what God is doing in the world: and so mayst easily run a course contrary to his will, and eternal counsel: and O how hazardous must this needs be to thee! The eternal peace of thy soul with God for ever, and thy prosperity, depend upon thy knowing the counsel of the Lord, and upon thy obedience thereunto. O! retire from this world's baits, snares, temptations, allurements and vanities; which draw out and defile the mind; and retreat inward, that the Lord may teach thee his fear, and preserve thee from those lusts and desires of the fleshly mind, which, being hearkened to and followed, are very dangerous to the soul, and may prove perilous outwardly also. What shall my love say to thee? O that the Lord would speak to thee in spirit, and give thee an ear to hear, that thou mightest be happy now and forever. Often have my bowels rolled over thee exceedingly, even in the day of thy adversity, and since thy prosperity. O that thou couldest remember God daily, and forget this world! Remember the years of thy affliction; and make use of the present day with an humble heart, and with a broken spirit. O! do nothing to provoke the Lord against thee; for surely his eye is upon thee, and his heart pondereth all thy ways. And bow before him for his counsel, that thou mayest not arise against thy Maker, as the foregoing powers have done; for if He rise up in battle against thee, thou wilt no more be able to stand before Him than they were. Nay, the stronger thou art outwardly settled, the greater will the glory of his name be in overturning thee. O that thou mightest rule under God, and for God! and not with that wisdom, and with those self-ends, and interests, which

unquestionable testimony concerning them, I had never looked towards them; for they were otherwise very despisable in my eyes. And this I cannot but testify concerning them, that I have found the life of God in my owning them; and that which God hath begotten in my heart refreshed, by the power of life in them. And none but the Lord knows the beauty and excellency of glory, which He hath hid under this mean appearance."

2. "The Lord hath hitherto preserved them against great oppositions, and is still able to preserve them. Every power hitherto hath made nothing of overrunning them; yet they have hitherto stood, by the care and tender mercy of the Lord; and the several powers which have persecuted them, have fallen one after another."

3. "I have had experience myself of the Lord's goodness and preservation of *me*, in my suffering with them for the testimony of his truth; who made my bonds pleasant to me; and my noisome prison, enough to have destroyed my weakly and tender-educated nature, a place of pleasure and delight; where I was comforted by my God night and day, and filled with prayers for his people; as also with love to, and prayers for, those who had been the means of outwardly afflicting me and others, upon the Lord's account."

4. "I have no doubt in my heart that the Lord will deliver us. The strength of man, the resolution of man, is nothing in my eye in [to] compare with the Lord. Whom the Lord loveth, He can save at his pleasure. Hath He begun to break our bonds and deliver us, and shall we distrust Him? Are we in a worse condition than Israel was, when the sea was before them, the mountains on each side, and the Egyptians behind pursuing them? He indeed that looketh with man's eye, can see no ground of hope, nor hardly a possibility of deliverance; but, to the eye of faith, it is now nearer, than when God began at first to deliver."

5. "It is the delight of the Lord and his glory, to deliver his people, when to the eye of sense it seemeth impossible. Then doth the Lord delight to stretch forth his arm, when none else can help; and then doth it please Him to deal with the enemies of his truth and people, when they are lifted up above the fear of *Him*, and are ready to say in their hearts concerning *them*, 'They are now in our hands. Who can deliver them?'

"Well, were it not in love to you, and in pity, in relation to what will certainly befal you, if you go on in this course, I could say in the joy of my heart, and in the sense of the good-will of my God to us, who suffereth these things to come to pass, *Go on. Try it out with the Spirit of the Lord. Come forth with your laws, and prisons, and spoiling of our goods, and banishment, and death* (if the Lord please) *and see if you can carry it.* For we come not forth against you in our own wills, or in any enmity against your persons or government, or in any stubbornness, or refractoriness of spirit; but with the lamb-like nature, which the Lord our God hath begotten in us, which is taught and enabled by Him both to do his will, and to suffer for his name's sake. And if we cannot thus overcome you even in patience of spirit and in love to you, and if the Lord our God please not to appear for us, we are content to be overcome by you. So the will of the Lord be done, saith my soul."

These queries have not any date. They are placed in Whiting's catalogue between the dates of 1662 and 1663. To the former of these, belongs the piece from which the following is taken, entitled, "Some observations from Romans xiv. 20." It is probable that the operation of grace upon a mind naturally tender and compassionate, produces a display of human nature in its most amiable point of view; and it should be surveyed with due reverence to the power that sometimes permits a combination of so many pleasing qualifications. At the same time it is proper to remember, that tempers, apparently cast in a rougher mould, have their appropriate place in the church, and in the world; and that all

depends upon each exercising his faculties, of whatsoever kind, in subordination to divine wisdom.

"I am," says this favoured man, "a lover of mankind in general, and have been a deep sufferer with, and traveller [travailer] for, all the miserable. None knows the path of my sorrows, or the extent of my bowels, but He that made me. It is not natural, or kindly to me, to upbraid any man with any kind of wickedness, or ever so justly deserved misery; but my bowels work concerning him towards the Spring of eternal power and compassions: even as I would be pitied, and represented to the Father of mercies in the like condition. Indeed I have been emptied from vessel to vessel, and tossed with multitudes of storms and tempests; yet the savour of my life remaineth with me to this day, and the Spirit of my God breatheth on my heart; blessed be his holy name for ever! And though I walk with one sort of people, because my heart sayeth (yea, the Spirit of the eternal God hath witnessed unto me, and shown me in that light which cannot deceive, and to that eye which cannot be deceived) that they are the people whom He hath chosen out of all the gatherings (throughout the earth), from the apostacy, to manifest his power in, and his presence among; I say, though I have been guided and led by the spirit of the Lord to walk among these; yet I am not bounded there, either in the love or in the unity of my heart; but I have unity with the integrity and zeal for God which is in others, of what sort or gathering soever; and I have tender bowels for all, even for those who hate and persecute that which is my life, and hath the love of my heart for ever."

"Oh, how have I prayed for the lost world! For all the souls of mankind, how hath my soul bowed in unutterable breathings of spirit before my God, and could not be silenced; until He quieted my spirit in [the] righteousness and excellency of his will and bid me leave it to Him."

There are scarcely any particulars of Isaac Penington's second imprisonment; at least few have offered themselves in the search, which the present compilation has occasioned. It is however known, and this little we learn from his friend Ellwood's testimony, which has been before mentioned, that he was taken out of a meeting for worship, and again confined in Aylesbury gaol for nearly the same space of time as at the former commitment: that is upwards of seventeen weeks.

About this time a very severe law had been made, especially against Friends. The penalty, enacted by this law, on assembling for the purpose of religious worship, in a number exceeding four, was for what was called the first offence, five pounds, for the second ten, and for the third, banishment: or, in case of non-payment of the fines, three, and six months' imprisonment. Soon after the publication of this law Isaac Penington, with many of the Friends of the adjacent country, went to Amersham, to attend the burial of a deceased acquaintance. As they were carrying the body along the street to the burying-ground, they were assaulted by a magistrate, who happened to be passing through the town. Hearing of he interment the put up his horse, procured constables and a multitude of assistants, and came forth, sword in hand, to attack the peaceable bearers. His first command to set down the coffin, though seconded with a blow, not succeeding, he himself threw it to the ground, and forced the attendants to leave it. He then caused the Friends to be apprehended, and, having procured another justice to join him, committed ten of them to Aylesbury prison: though they were not even assembled under pretence of worship. It was late on the Seventh-day of the week when the prisoners were intrusted to the constable. Aylesbury was nine miles off, according to Ellwood's account, fourteen as they are now measured; and the constable neither liked so long and so late an expedition, nor that the town should be at the charge of keep-

ing the ten prisoners two nights and the intermediate day. He therefore suffered them all to return home, on their parole to attend him at Amersham on Second-day morning. This confidence in the word of Friends was not an uncommon thing in the time of their persecution. The prisoners, of whom Isaac Penington was one, did not infringe upon that confidence. They came according to the appointment and were conducted to gaol. Some former prisoners had been ill-treated in this gaol, and closely confined among the felons, because they had refused some fees. The gaoler was not at home when the Friends from Amersham were brought in. They forbore therefore to take possession of any rooms until he should return; and they then declared they would have a free prison. In the mean time they had dined on the ground, in the prison-yard, on bread and cheese; in much concern for Isaac Penington, on account of the tenderness of his constitution. He, on the contrary, was so lively in his spirit, and so cheerfully resigned to suffer, that he rather encouraged his fellow-sufferers, than needed encouragement from them: and the gaoler, on his return, fatigued probably with the firmness of the former prisoners, granted lodgings to these on their own terms. The assizes were just at hand; but the judge (Morton) refused to hear their cause, referring it to the justices who had committed them. These therefore fined them six shillings and eightpence each, and, the payment being of course refused, committed them for one month to prison, on the act for banishment. It is to be observed that the justices had power to lessen both the fine, and the term of imprisonment previous to banishment. Lenity might occasion the first, and a desire to procure speedy banishment, the other. The words of the act were not exceeding five pounds, or three months, and so in the second fining and imprisonment, of ten pounds and six months. At the expiration therefore of one month, Penington and his companions were enlarged; and they gratified the gaoler for his civility.

Isaac Penington appeared now to be at the mercy of the civil power, and it seemed probable that he would not be long in passing through the second step preparatory to banishment. For it was not to be expected that a man who had bought his present profession at the price of so many years of tribulation, would lightly forsake it, or forbear to hold up a public testimony to that which he knew to be the truth. But it is very remarkble, that of the many that were imprisoned on the act of banishment, and even of those who were convicted of what was termed the third offence, few were actually sent on ship-board, and the greater part of those never reached the plantations; but way was made for their return, in a remarkable manner. As to Isaac Penington, he seems to have been in some measure protected from the oppression of the civil power, by falling soon after his release into the hands of the military.

A soldier came to his house without any warrant, and informed him that he must go before Philip Palmer one of the deputy lieutenants of the county of Bucks. He meekly attended the rude soldier; and was sent by Palmer, under a guard of soldiers, to his old quarters at Aylesbury. He was committed by a kind of mittimus or order, importing "that the goaler should receive and keep him safe in custody; during the pleasure of the earl of Bridgewater." At this time it was suspected that the plague was in the goal. It was the year in which so many thousands fell victims to that dreadful disease, in London. Interest was therefore made with the earl, who was importuned by a person of considerable quality and power in the county, to permit that Isaac Penington should be removed to another house in the town, and there kept a prisoner, until the goal should be clear of the contagion. But this nobleman seems to have conceived so great a displeasure against the innocent prisoner, that he refused to grant the request: although all the while no other cause of his confinement appeared than the pleasure of the persecutor. At length, however, a prisoner in the goal died of the plague; on

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which the goaler's wife, in the absence of her husband, permitted Penington to be removed to another house, in which he was shut up about six weeks. After this, by the interest of the earl of Ancram, a release was obtained from Palmer: and, after a confinement of nine months, with danger of his life, and for no alleged offence, Isaac Penington was suffered to return home.

But before he had been again settled in his family a month, a party of soldiers from Palmer came to his house, and seizing him in bed, conveyed him again to Aylesbury goal. The earl of Bridgewater was reported to have been the director of this measure. And it must probably have been during this second confinement, that the pious sufferer wrote the following letter to his unrelenting persecutor.

"To the Earl of Bridgewater.

"Friend,

"It is the desire of my heart to walk with God, in the true fear of his name, and in true love and good-will to all men, all my days here upon the earth. For this end, I wait upon God, night and day, to know his will and to receive certain instruction from Him concerning what is acceptable in his sight. After He hath in any thing made manifest his pleasure, I wait upon Him for strength to perform it; and when He hath wrought it by me, my soul blesseth Him therefor. If this be a right course, I am not to be condemned herein; if it be not, and thou knowest better, show me in love, meekness, and tenderness; as I would be willing to make any thing known to thee, for thy good, which the Lord hath shown me. But this I am fully assured of, that God is higher than man; and that his will and laws are to be set up and obeyed in the first place: and man's only in the second; and in their due subordination to the will and laws of God.

"Now, friend, apply thyself to do that which is right and noble, and that which is truly justifiable in God's

sight: that thou mayest give a comfortable account to Him when he shall call the thereunto. That which thou hast done to me hath not made me thy enemy; but, in the midst of the sense of it, I desire thy welfare, and that thou mayest so carry thyself in thy place and actions, as that thou mayest neither provoke God against thee in this world, nor in the world to come. Hast thou not yet afflicted me enough without cause? Wouldest thou have me bow to thee therein, wherein the Lord hath not given me liberty? If I should give thee outward titles and honours, might I not do thee hurt? O! come down, be low in thy spirit before the Lord, honour Him in thy heart and ways, and wait for the true nobility and honour from Him. Thou hast but a time to be in the world, and then eternity begins; and what thou hast sown here, thou must then reap. O that thou mightest sow, not to thy own will and wisdom, but to God's Spirit: and know his guidance, who is only able to lead man aright! Indeed, thou shouldest be subject in thy own heart, to that which thou art offended at in others: even that in the inner parts, which testifies for God, and against the thoughts, ways, and works of corrupt man; that thou mightest feel a principle of life from God, and good fruit brought forth from that principle to Him; and that the evil nature, with the evil works thereof, might be cut down in thee; that thy soul may escape the wrath and misery which attend the works and workers of iniquity. I have sent thee this inclosed in love. Read it in fear and humility, lifting up thy heart to the Lord, who giveth understanding, that it may be a blessing to thee; for in true love was it writ, and is of a healing and guiding nature. I have formerly writ to thee, but my way hath been so barred up, that I have not found access easy; and how or whether this will come to thy hand I know not. But this I truly say to thee, I have felt the Lamb's nature under my sufferings from thee, whereunto I have given thee no provocation, neither for the beginning nor continuance of them; and, if thou canst, bring that thing to the

trial of the witness of God in thy heart, that will deal truly with thee, blaming what God blames, and justifying what he justifieth. And, though the Lord beholdeth, and will plead the cause of his innocent ones (who the more helpless they are, the more they are considered and tendered by Him), yet I do not desire that thou shouldest suffer, either from God or man, on my account but that thou mightest be guided to, and preserved in that which will be sweet rest, peace, and safety, to all that are sheltered by it, in the troublous and stormy hour, in which the Lord will distress man, and make him feel his sin and misery.

"This is the sum of what I have at present to say, who have writ this, not for any by-end, but in the stirrings of true love towards thee, and from a true desire that thou mightest feel the power of God forming thy heart aright, and bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in thee; that thou mightest be made by Him of the seed of the blessed, and inherit the blessing, and find the earthly nature consumed, and brought to naught in thee; to which is the curse, and which must feel the curse, as God brings forth his righteous judgments in the hearts, and upon the heads, of the transgressors. And knowing there to be a certain day of God's calling transgressors to account, and the terribleness of his wrath, and consuming pleasure in that day, I warn thee in tenderness, and in the bowels of love beseech thee, to consider thy ways, and make thy peace with Him, that thou mayest not be irrecoverably and eternally miserable; but mayest be transformed by his life and nature, and sow to Him the fruits thereof, that thou mayest reap and receive of Him that which is the soul's joy.

"And, friend, know this assured truth, it is not a religion of man's making or choosing (neither the pope's, nor any other man's,) but only that which is of God, which is acceptable to Him; and what will become of that man, whose very religion and worship is hateful to God? Where will he stand, or what account will he be able to give when he appears before Him?

Thou hast not often met with such plain dealing as this. These things very nearly concern thee. O, wait upon God for his true light, that thou mayest not be deceived about them; because thy loss thereby will be so great and irreparable!

"I am thy friend in these things, and have written as a true lover and desirer of the welfare of thy soul.

"I. P."

"From Aylesbury goal,
24th of 6th month, 1666."

The foregoing letter is taken from a late collection, published in 1796 by John Kendall: in which are also other letters dated from his prison-house, or during the time he remained there, replete with instruction, and serving to show the manner in which he passed his days of confinement. This is further exemplified by the number of his own publications dated from this prison: displaying the undaunted mind, calm amidst sufferings, not cast down by oppression, and breathing for the advancement of righteousness. The following extract of a letter to a Friend, written at Aylesbury about three months before the foregoing letter, will exemplify what I have said.

"The Lord is tender of me, and merciful to me. Though, indeed, I have felt much weakness both inwardly and outwardly, yet my strength doth not forsake me; but the mercies of the Lord are renewed to me, 'morning by morning.' I could almost sing to his glorious name, seeing (in the pure, powerful, overcoming life) the death of all that troubles Israel. O the gates of hell, ye shall not prevail against the least lamb of my Father's preserving, glory be to his mercy, to his love, to his power, to his wisdom, to his goodness, for evermore!"

His health too during this imprisonment was greatly impaired. He remained in prison a year and a half, during which time he was never brought up, to either sessions or assize; but by some illegal means continued

as a prisoner on the calendar. He lay in rooms so cold, damp, and unhealthy, that it had nearly cost him his life, and sent him to the company of confessors, who in the reign of the second Charles, were killed by the rigours of confinement. He became, however, so much disabled, that he lay in a weak state several months. At length a relation of his wife, procured his removal by habeas corpus, to the bar of the court of King's bench, where with the wonder of the court that a man should be imprisoned so long for nothing, he was discharged in the year 1668.

Although Isaac Penington, as has been shewn, had his abundant consolation, under his sufferings, it does not appear to have lifted him up. The following letter to George Fox, written from Aylesbury goal, may serve to prove this, and to evince his high esteem for that Friend, and probably may be otherwise generally acceptable to the reader.

"Dear G. F.

"I feel the tender mercy of the Lord, and some proportion of that brokenness, fear, and humility, which I have long waited for, and breathed after. I feel unity with, and strength from, the body: O! blessed be the Lord, who hath fitted and restored me, and brought up my life from the grave. I feel an high esteem and dear love to thee, whom the Lord hath chosen, anointed, and honoured, and of thy brethren and fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord. And dear G. F. I beg thy love; I entreat thy prayer, in faith and assurance that the Lord hears thee, that I may be yet more broken, that I may be yet more filled with the fear of the Lord, that I may be yet poorer, and humbler before the Lord, and may walk in perfect humility and tenderness of spirit before Him, all my days. Dear G. F. thou mayest feel my desires and wants more fully than my own heart. Be helpful to me in tender love, that I may feel settlement and stability in the Truth; and perfect sepa-

ration from, and dominion in the Lord over all that is contrary thereto.

"I. P."

"Aylesbury goal,
15th of 5th month, 1667."

"I entreat thy prayers for my family, that the name of the Lord may be exalted, and his Truth flourish therein. Dear G. F. indeed my soul longs for the pure, full, and undisturbed reign of the Life, in me."

Another short effusion of his benevolent heart, during this imprisonment can scarcely fail of pleasing such as desire the welfare of the Christian community. It is addressed to "Friends of Amersham," his neighbours.

"Friends,

"Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness, and bearing with one another, and forgiving one another; and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another with a tender hand, if there has been any slip or fall; and waiting till the Lord give sense and repentance, if sense and repentance in any be wanting. O! wait to feel this spirit, and to be guided to walk in this spirit: that ye may enjoy the Lord in sweetness, and walk sweetly, meekly, tenderly, peaceably, and lovingly, one with another. And then ye will be a praise to the Lord; and any thing that is, or hath been, or may be amiss, ye will come over in the true dominion, even in the Lamb's dominion; and that which is contrary shall be trampled upon, as life rules in you. So, watch to your hearts and ways, and watch over one another in that which is gentle and tender, and knows it can neither preserve itself, nor help another out of the snare: but the Lord must be waited upon, to do this in and for all. So mind Truth, the service, enjoyment, and possession of it in your hearts; and so to walk as ye may bring no disgrace upon it;

but ye may be a good savour in the places where ye live; the meek, innocent, tender, righteous life reigning in you, governing of you, and shining through you in the eyes of all with whom ye converse.

"Your friend in the Truth and desirer of your welfare and prosperity therein.

"I. P."

"Aylesbury, 4th of 3rd month 1667."

CHAP. III.

Loss of his estate—attachment to his friends in Bucks—goes to board at Waltham-Abbey, Essex—by the assistance of his wife purchases a house at Amersham Woodside—she superintends the alterations—Conventicle-act—sixth imprisonment, at Reading—released by patent with many others—his constancy in suffering—death of his son at sea—his tract entitled "Flesh and Blood of Christ," &c.—its occasion—a review of it—letter to a Friend.

HITHERTO on his several releasements from prison, Isaac Penington had returned to his house, called the Grange, at Chalfont, St. Peter's; but on this releasement he had scarcely a home to which to resort. His wife relates that they had been injured by their relations, who, knowing their conscientious scruple to swear, had involved them in a suit in Chancery, where their answer without an oath was invalid. They were also wronged by their tenants, and perplexed with various law-suits; but at length the relations were able to carry their machinations to so great a length, that, during the time that Isaac Penington lay in the last-mentioned cruel imprisonment, his wife and family were turned out of his house, by the persons who had gotten possession of his estate. By these means the family was broken up. The wife placed herself at Aylesbury, to be near her husband: and the youthful Gulielma Springett went for a while on a visit to Bristol. Afterwards the family had lodgings in the adjoining parish called Chalfont St. Giles's, and thence removed to more spacious ones at Amersham. During their residence at the former place, the tutor, too, of the children, who from having been

himself fostered in the family, was now become in his turn, variously useful in it, was taken from them and committed to prison, by Bennett, the same violent magistrate who the year before had committed both him and his patron, as hath been already related. At length means were found to provide themselves with a suitable habitation, in the following manner.

They were much attached to the friends in the neighbourhood of the Chalfonts, whom they had been instrumental in gathering to the knowledge of the Truth, with whom they had suffered, and with whom, no doubt, they had harmonized and rejoiced. They therefore sought for a house in that neighbourhood diligently; but finding none that seemed to suit them, to be let, and not inclining to make a purchase, the wife proposed that they should go and reside on an estate in Kent, part probably of her own real property, which had not, like all her husband's, been rent away by the relations. To this, Isaac Penington objected, for the reasons already mentioned, and because the inhabitants of that part of Buckinghamshire, in which they had so long lived, knew and commiserated their troubles and losses, and did not expect their establishment now could be any longer as it had been, or equal to the rank they had held. They had lived in great plenty, but were now obliged to submit to a much lower style of life than that to which they had been accustomed; and to their neighbours it was almost a matter of surprise that they could still pay to every one his own. At length they concluded to go and board during one summer at Waltham-Abbey in Essex, in order that their children, who about this time lost their domestic tutor by the marriage of Thomas Ellwood, might have the accommodation of the school kept at that town by Christopher Taylor.* Near the

* This was the school in which there was so extraordinary a visitation, and influence of good, among the children; as is circumstantially related in a pamphlet published by C. Taylor, entitled, "A Testimony to the Lord's Power and blessed appearance among

time of their departure for their new lodgings, a Friend who was expressing his regret at losing their society, again proposed to them a small purchase. Mary Penington, who seems in temporals as well as spirituals, to have been truly a help-meet to her husband, objected much to the proposal, and told the proposer that the circumstances of her husband and herself would not admit of it. Their friend, however, urged his proposal so strongly, that Mary was induced to go and inspect the premises. It was a small estate called Woodside, near Amersham, of about £30 per annum, with an old house on it: and it had so ruinous and unpromising an appearance, that Mary entirely gave up the thought of the purchase. Soon after this, the worthy couple were disappointed in their expectation of procuring a house at Beaconsfield; on which proposals were again made to them, respecting the estate at Woodside. The remainder of the story I cannot better relate than in the words of this notable woman, to whom her husband left the entire management of the business. "Taking," says she, "some friends with me, I went to see it again. While they viewed the ground, I went into the house. The whole plan was in my mind—what to pull down, and what to add. Calculating the whole expence, I judged it might be done by selling an estate of mine in Kent."

"Next day we went for Waltham, requesting our friends to act in the affair, and write [to] us upon it; which they did; and informed us the title was clear. When I received the message, my mind was much to the Lord, with desires that if it was the place he gave us liberty to settle in, He would order it for us. My husband was very averse to building; yet considering his *all* was lost, and the estate to be disposed of was mine, he was willing I should do what I would in the

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Children," &c.—of which a new edition was printed by Darton and Harvey, in 1799. He was also the author of several other pieces, particularly a compendious Grammar of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, entitled Compendium trium linguarum, &c.

affair, provided he had no trouble in building; so we agreed for the purchase. My mind was often engaged in prayer that I might be preserved from entanglements and cumber; and that [the house] might be such an habitation as would manifest that the Lord was again restoring us, and had regard to us. When it was bought, I went industriously and cheerfully about the business: but I saw many unusual incumbrances present themselves, which, I still cried to the Lord, that I might go through in his fear, and not darken and encumber my mind. I was, by the surveyor, put upon altering my plan, and raising a part new from the ground. My husband joining with him, I could not well avoid it. This brought great trouble upon me: for now I did not see my way so well as before; and, not knowing how I should compass the charge, I took no pleasure in any thing. At last I fell ill, and could not look after it. Great was my exercise of mind; one while fearing I had not divine approbation upon my undertaking; then reflecting that I did not seek great things, nor vain glory in a fine habitation: for according to my plan it would have been very ordinary. After a time of close exercise and prayer, I again came to clearness, and the honesty and uprightness of my intention was accepted, so that I went on without anxious care or disquiet, and the building was managed by me rather in delight, through the answer of peace which I felt; and not by reason of any distinguishing solicitude I had about it." (Should she not rather have said *any particular gratification*; for solicitude more often banishes, than procures delight.) "When I went to meeting in the morning, I set all things in order; and rarely found them so much as to rise in my mind, when going to or at meeting. This kept my mind very sweet and savoury, for I had nothing in all this which disquieted me, having no other care but that there might be no waste, which I always prevented by my constant inspection, so that no cause of fretting or anger was administered. I laid me down and rested very pleasant-

ly. I awoke in a sweet sense, and was employed all the day: but I had no labour or disturbance in my mind; which kept me in health and sweet peace, till the whole was accomplished."

Let no one espouse the opinion that spiritual direction may not be useful in the management of temporal concerns. It is certain that on various occasions, by means of undertaking plans which have the semblance of practicability and usefulness, many persons are daily led into disappointment; and often, into increasing degrees of "alienation from God." And to come a little nearer to our present subject, it seems peculiarly advisable for religious people to determine with great caution the place of their outward habitation. There is probably no place, in which we may not be influenced by the conduct of those around us, or where we may not ourselves contribute to influence that of our neighbours. For, as we are born to be social, it is not probably saying too much of any man, that something may be learned from him. How desirable then to be in the spot of providential allotment; which is in fact the spot of safety, benefit, and usefulness! Mary Penington appears to have been a person early imbued with sentiments like these: and those who are fond of observing character, and of tracing it through the vicissitudes of a man's life, may here recognize the same feature of her mind, which she early displayed, by her trust in Providence respecting outward things; as has been related in the account of her progress to religious stability.

It may easily be imagined that Isaac Penington's mind was active, during the latter restraints on his person, and some proof of it has been given. He had, however, recourse to the press about eleven times in the four years preceding his removal to Woodside, the habitation which the industry and property of his wife had been the means of providing for him. But Woodside did not yet become the asylum of his latter days; for

he was immured for a year and three quarters, suffering under the arm of persecution, in the county gaol at Reading.

In the year 1670 was passed that singularly oppressive law, commonly called the Conventicle-Act. It imposed heavy fines on such dissenters as should suffer meetings to be held in their houses, and gave unusual powers to magistrates for the levying of these, and other fines which it imposed, and for the imprisonment of such as should become obnoxious to the severity of the law. It also held out great encouragement to informers, and of course the country was soon infested with that pernicious race of men. By the vigilent and seasonable exertions of Thomas Ellwood, who, in nearly the outset of the business in the county of Bucks, procured two informers to be convicted of perjury, Buckinghamshire was not much molested with this new engine of oppression; but in the neighbouring county of Berks, the Friends had their full measure of distress by means of the persecuting law. The goal at Reading was crowded with them, and Isaac Penington going, according to Christian practice, to visit them in their confinement, was informed against before a magistrate who had long signalised himself as a furious persecutor. By this man Isaac Penington was committed to the same prison, whither he had come to sympathise with his brethren already there. We do not in this instance read of his being at any religious meeting, or violating any clause of the late act. It is, however, more than possible that his visit was employed in silent retirement: but the current of persecution at that time raged too violently to be always confined even in legal channels.

It is matter of regret that our early recorders of the sufferings of Friends, are not so explicit in their details, as to make it always easy to trace a Friend through the alleged offence, the law by which he suffered, the punishment, and the mode of relief. In the twenty-one months of Isaac Penington's detention, it is probable that he was, at some of the assizes or sessions that oc-

curred during the period, convicted of refusing the oath of allegiance, because it is related by Ellwood, in his testimony, that he was brought under the sentence of præmunire. It appears also from Besse's Account of Sufferings, that the magistrate had sent for him, on the information of the goaler, had tendered to him the oath, and had made the refusal the ostensible reason of his commitment. However, when Charles the Second released, by letters patent, such Friends as were imprisoned on suits of the crown, Isaac Penington shared in the benefit, and left, for the sixth and last time, the confinement of a prison. A fellow-sufferer, in several of his imprisonments, gives the following description of his conduct in those trying situations. "Being made willing by the power of God to suffer with great patience, cheerfulness, contentedness, and true nobility of spirit, he was a good example to me and others. I do not remember that ever I saw him cast down, or dejected in his spirit, in the time of his close confinement, nor speak hardly of those that persecuted him: for he was of that temper as to love enemies, and to do good to those that hated him: having received a measure of that virtue, from Christ his master, that taught him so to do. Indeed I may say, in the prison he was a help to the weak, being made instrumental in the hand of the Lord for that end. O! the remembrance of the glory that did often overshadow us in the place of confinement: so that indeed the prison was made by the Lord, who was powerfully with us, as a pleasant palace! I was often, with many more, by those streamings of life that did many times run through his vessel, greatly overcome with the pure presence, and overcoming love of our God, that was plentifully shed abroad in our hearts."

I have proceeded so connectedly with the account of the sufferings of Isaac Penington in the support of his principles; among which the loss of his estate, so far as his religious restraint from swearing had a share in facilitating the designs of his relations, must be account-

ed a great one: that I have omitted to mention in the exact order of time, a domestic trouble occasioned by the death of his son. It was Isaac, the second son, a youth of excellent, and very promising abilities. He was intended to be educated for a merchant; but before it was thought fit to engage him in the occupations of the counting house, his parents consented to a proposal that he should make a voyage to Barbadoes, for the purpose of passing a little time not unaptly for his future prospects in life, of seeing the island, and gaining some knowledge of the sea. He was therefore intrusted to the care of a valuable friend who commanded a vessel in the Barbadoes trade; and took with him a small adventure, made up by his friends. All seemed going prosperously on, and he was returning with his little cargo of produce, when unwarily he fell overboard while the ship was sailing before a brisk gale; nor could the utmost care and diligence of the master and mariners of the ship avail to recover him. The news of this event must have reached his affectionate parents, before the last imprisonment of Isaac Penington, and about the time of the family's entrance on the house at Woodside. Ellwood the preceptor of this youth partook deeply of the grief occasioned by his death, and wrote some lines of condolence. He doth not often excel in poetry, though his thoughts are worthy the Christian, and on this occasion a motto which he subjoins to his verses, seems to contain the essence of all stable consolation. Whence it is quoted I know not.

———*Domino mens nixa quieta est.*

From the time that Isaac Penington went to inhabit the asylum of his declining years, which was procured by the care, and at the charge of his wife, few are the occurrences related of him. The remainder of his life must therefore principally be surveyed by occasional

views of the tenor of his mind, as it is exhibited in some of his letters, or publications.

It appears from the preface of a tract published in 1675, entitled "The Flesh and Blood of Christ in the mystery and in the outward, briefly, plainly, and uprightly acknowledged, and testified to, &c." that he had lately been in London. His business was to attend some meetings between Friends and the Baptists. About the year 1673 a baptist minister, named Hicks, had published some invidious dialogues under the title of "A Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker." In these he is said to have made his supposed Quaker appear not a little ridiculous and profane. His way seems to have been to make his pretended Christian prove false doctrine against the Quakers by quotations out of their books. Among others he quotes Isaac Penington; but he attempts to establish his charges by a mode of citation so unfair, that it was probably on this account that Penington thought himself engaged not only to attend some of the meetings; but also to vindicate himself in print, by means of the pamphlet already mentioned. As it may serve to show the manner in which Isaac Penington managed controversy, and thus exhibit him in a light somewhat different from that in which we have hitherto viewed him, though still tinged with philanthropy; as it may demonstrate the faith of Friends on some deep and important points of doctrine; and as it may hold up to view the accustomed method of the spirit of error, in attempting to misrepresent when it cannot refute; it may be proper to make some copious extracts from this pamphlet.

Hicks had charged the Quakers with accounting *that the blood of Christ was no more than a common thing.* For proof of this, he had drawn together some disjointed passages from a book of Penington's, called "A question to the professors of Christianity, whether they have the true, living, powerful, saving knowledge of Christ, or no," &c. Therefore, says Isaac Penington, "having

been at that meeting to clear my innocency in that particular; but the thing not then coming in question, ——it was in my heart——to give forth this testimony to take off that untruth and calumny of T. H. both from the people called Quakers and myself, being both of us greatly injured, as the Lord God of heaven and earth knoweth. I have had experience of that despised people many years, and I have often heard them (even the ancient ones of them) own Christ both inwardly and outwardly. Yea, I heard one of the ancients of them thus testify, in a public meeting many years since: That if Christ had not come in the flesh in the fulness of time, to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and to offer himself up a sacrifice for mankind, all mankind had utterly perished."

This allusion to the words of the ancient Friend, is strongly in point to prove, as it is intended to prove, the high and infinite value which our pious ancestors and predecessors set on the death and sufferings of Christ. Its accuracy, however, in point of argument, as an abstract position, may, I think, be questioned; because it seems to limit to one mode, the operation of divine love. It is enough for us to receive and embrace the Christian dispensation, as the mode chosen by Almighty Wisdom.

"What cause then," continues Penington, "have we to praise the Lord God, for sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for what his Son did therein! O professors, do not pervert our words (by reading them with a prejudiced mind) quite contrary to the drift of God's Spirit by us. If ye should thus read the Holy Scriptures, yea, the very words of Christ himself therein, and give that wisdom of yours, which fights against us, scope to comment upon them, and pervert them after this manner, what a strange and hideous appearance of untruth, and contradiction to the very Scriptures of the Old Testament, might ye make of

that wonderful appearance of God?* For the words of Christ seemed so foolish and impossible to the wise men of that age that they frequently contradicted, and sometimes derided him."——

"Oh! T. H., dost thou believe the eternal judgment at the great day, not outwardly only in notion, but inwardly in heart? Oh! then consider how wilt thou answer it to God, for saying so many things in the name of a people, as their belief and words, which never were spoken by any one of them, nor ever came into any one of their hearts! Innocency in me, life in me, truth in me, the Christian spirit and nature in me, is a witness against thee, that thou wrotest thy dialogues out of the Christian nature and spirit."——"I pity thee, yea, I can truly say I forgive thee the injury thou hast done me (though indeed it is very great, thus to represent me publicly; what thou couldst not have done, if thou hadst equally considered the things written in that book); and I also desire that thou mayst be sensible of what thou hast so evilly done, and confess it before God, that He also might forgive thee."——"As for my particular, I had committed my cause to the Lord, and intended to have been wholly silent, knowing my innocency will be cleared by Him in this particular at the great day; and the love, truth, and uprightness wherein I wrote these things owned by Him. But in the love of God, and in the stillness and tenderness of my spirit, I was moved by Him to write what follows. And oh! that it would please the Lord to make it serviceable, even to T. H. himself, for his good."

The foregoing is a quotation from the preface; the following, from the body of the work.

"In the second part of Thomas Hicks's Dialogues, called Continuation, p. 4, he maketh his personated Quaker speak thus: *Thou sayest, we account the blood*

* Who would think that I. Penington should in 1802 be charged with Socinianism; or, to use the new name which persons of those principles have assumed, with having been a Unitarian?

of Christ no more than a common thing; yea, no more than the blood of a common thief. To which he makes his personated Christian answer thus: *Isaac Penington (who I suppose is an approved Quaker) asks this question, Can outward blood cleanse? Therefore, saith he, we must inquire whether it was the blood of the veil, that is, of the human nature; or the blood within the veil, viz. of that spiritual man, consisting of flesh, blood, and bones, which took on him the veil, or human nature. It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward; and can outward blood cleanse?* First, I answer, these were not my words, which he has set down as mine; but words of his own patching up, partly out of several queries of mine, and partly out of his own conceivings upon my queries; as if he intended to make me appear both ridiculous and wicked at once. For I no where say or affirm, or ever did believe, that Christ is a spiritual man consisting of flesh, blood, and bones, which took on him the veil of human nature. Thus he represents me as ridiculous. It is true, Christ inwardly, or as to his inward being, was a Spirit, or God blessed for ever, manifested in flesh; which, (to speak properly) cannot have flesh, blood, and bones, as man hath. And then, besides his alterations at the beginning, putting in only four words of my query, and leaving out this which next follows (which might have manifested my drift and intent in them) he puts in an affirmation, which was not mine, in these his own words, *It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward;* and then annexeth to this affirmation of his own, the words of my former query, *Can outward blood cleanse?* As if these words of mine, Can outward blood cleanse? did necessarily infer that the blood of Christ is but a common thing. Herein he represents me wicked, and makes me speak, by his changing and adding, that which never was in my heart; and the contrary whereto I have several times affirmed in that very book, where those several queries were put (out of which he forms this his own query, giving it forth in my name). For in the 10th page of that book, begin-

ning at line 3, I positively affirm thus: that *Christ did offer up the flesh and blood of that body (though not only so, for He poured out his soul, He poured out his life) a sacrifice or offering for sin, a sacrifice unto the Father, and in it tasted death for every man; and that it is upon consideration (and through God's acceptance)* of this sacrifice for sin, that the sins of believers are pardoned, that God might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus, or who is of the faith of Jesus.* Is this common flesh and blood? Can this be affirmed of common flesh and blood? Ought not he to have considered this, and other passages in my book of the same tendency, and not thus have reproached me, and misrepresented me to the world?——Doth he herein do as he would be done by?——I might also except against those words, *human nature* (which he twice putteth in) not being my words, nor indeed my sense; for by human nature, as I judge, is understood more than the body; whereas, I, by the word veil, intended no more than the flesh (or outward body), which in scripture is expressly so called. Heb. x. 20. 'Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.'"

In the next place, Isaac Penington complains of his adversary for not citing the page, or even the book, whence he drew his pretended quotation. Afterwards he goes on, "Thirdly, the drift of all those queries in that book was not to vilify the flesh and blood of Christ, by representing it as a common or useless thing; but to bring people, from sticking in the outward, to a sense of the inward mystery: without which inward sense and feeling, the magnifying and crying up the outward doth not avail." These last lines are an epitome of the work and concern of our ancient Friends. In consequence of their pressing home upon men's consciences the inward work of sanctification, by means of the light of Christ, and not much urging a belief in the mere letter, which in their day did not appear to want

* In Pennington's Works, the parenthesis ends at *sin*.

to be urged, their adversaries accused them of denying the outward facts of the gospel. At this day, when the spirit of infidelity stalks abroad with greater confidence than in the days of Penington, these outward facts are treated by many with unbecoming slight: Friends have therefore thought it needful more nakedly to avow their adherence to them; and the gainsaying spirit has so far shown itself to be the same which opposed our predecessors, that it still attempts to make it believed that Isaac Penington and his associates were inclining to that opinion which tends to degrade the character of Christ, and to assign to Him the rank of a mere man. "Believe not" therefore "every spirit."

After much more than is convenient to be quoted in the limits of this work, Penington proceeds to his fourth head of vindication, which, much abridged, runs thus. "Fourthly, This query, *Can outward blood cleanse the conscience, &c.* doth not necessarily, nor indeed at all, infer, that the blood of Christ, as to the outward, was but a common thing, or useless.—It was put to the professors to answer inwardly in their hearts, who, I did believe, upon serious consideration, could not but confess—that outward blood itself (or of itself) could not cleanse and purge away the filth that was inward; but that must be done by that which is inward, living, and spiritual. Then hereby they had been brought to see the necessity of the mystery, the Spirit, the power, the life of the Son, to be inwardly revealed in them; and then I had obtained my end.—And if they could once come to this—I could meet them a great way in speaking glorious things of, and attributing a cleansing or washing virtue to the outward, in, through, and with the inward. For I do not separate the inward and outward in my own mind; but the Lord opened my heart; and taught me thus to distinguish according to the scriptures, in love to them, and for their sakes. For that was not my intent, to deny the outward, or make it appear as a common or useless thing. There was

never such a sense in my heart; nor was ever word written or spoken by me, to that end."

Among the various concerns of Isaac Penington in this year, was a letter written in answer to one which he had received, from some person whom he apprehended to be stumbling in the path of duty. The state is probably not uncommon; and therefore the insertion of it may afford help to some. It seems addressed to one convinced, in degree, of the principles of Friends; but weak in adopting the practice, especially in some particular, and that probably of the kind which is an open confession of self-denial. Thus it begins.

"Ah, my poor distressed, entangled, friend! While thou seekest to avoid the snare, thou deeply runnest into it: for thou art feeding on the tree of knowledge, in giving way to those thoughts, reasonings, and suggestions, which keep thee from obedience to that which hath been made manifest to thy understanding. And thou mayest well be feeble in thy mind, while thou art thus separated from Him who is thy strength, and lettest in his enemy. This is not the right feebleness of mind, which God pities; nor the right way of waiting to receive strength. Why shouldst not thou act so as God gives thee light; and why shouldst not thou appear willing to obey him even in little things, so far as He hath given thee light? What if I should say that this is all but the subtilty of the serpent's wisdom, to avoid the cross; and is not that simplicity and plainness of heart towards God, which thou takest it to be; and that thou art loth to be so poor, and low, and mean, in the sight of others, as this practice would make thee appear."

"And what a subtil device hath the enemy put into thy mind about prayer; which hath no weight or truth in it, as applied in this present case. For prayer is the breath of life, an effect of God's spiritual breathing, which no man can perform aright without the Spirit's breathing upon him. Therefore the Spirit is to be waited upon, for his breathings and holy fire, that the

sacrifice may be living, and acceptable to the living God. But this" (here probably he refers to something respecting prayer mentioned by his correspondent) "is language, as a man or woman in ordinary converse; and doth not require a motion of life to bring it forth, no more than to bring forth other words. And wilt thou say, Thou longest and pantest after the Lord, and the way of truth and righteousness; and yet remain walking, against the light which God has given thee, in things of this nature?

"O my friend, thou and thy husband have dallied too long. The Lord hath shewn great love and mercy towards you. Take heed of dallying any longer. Make straight paths to your feet, lest that which is crooked (your feet have hitherto been too winding and crooked) be turned out of the way; but it is the desire of my soul for you, that they may rather be rectified and healed."

"Thou sayest, the seasons when thou findest it most laid upon thee, is in the hearing of Friends, or soon after; and when, in that sense, thou resolvest to enter upon the practice, thou findest an inability to keep thee therein; though thy reason is not only silenced, but in measure subjected thereunto. Now do but mind how far the Lord hath gone with thee; and what hinders, and whether it be thy duty to give way to, or to resist, that which hinders. Thou dost confess God hath laid it upon thee; and laid it upon thee at those times when thy heart is most tender and open towards Him (even when thou art in the hearing of Friends, or soon after); and hath brought thee into a resolution to enter into the practice; nay, to help thee further, hath not only silenced thy reason, but subjected it in measure. Have not many entered into the practice, and found acceptance of a blessing therein, who never were thus helped? What wouldst thou have of the Lord? How far hath He proceeded towards bringing thee into obedience in this thing! But thou sayest, thou findest an inability to keep therein. Dost thou abide in the

faith, where the strength is dispensed; and out of the thoughts and consultations, where the strength of the strongest (if they intermeddle there) is broken? O! take heed of murmuring against the Lord (as thou hast been too apt to do); and consider what great matter of complaint He hath against thee. What could He have done more for thee, than He hath done? thou being no more ready to meet Him than thou hast been; but, upon all occasions, turning aside from his convictions and drawings, into thine own thoughts and reasonings.

"I received thy letter last night; and, upon reading of it, was greatly burdened and grieved for thy sake; feeling thy spirit so exceedingly wrong in this matter, and thy reasoning and way therein so crooked and provoking to the Lord. But this morning, my heart was opened and drawn forth in this manner to thee. The Lord give a present and a future sight of the enemy's working, against the working of the love of God towards thee, and against the redemption and peace of thy soul. My heart breatheth to the Lord for thee; and desireth that He may manifest to thee that nature, wisdom and spirit from whence these things arise, and what is in thee which they prevail upon: that the child may not always stick in the birth, but at length be brought forth into the light, into the life, into the faith which gives victory, and into the single-hearted and holy obedience, where the pure power is met with.

"Thy friend in the truth and in the sincere love. "I. P."

"Amersham, 25th of 9th month, 1675."

CHAP. V.

Goes to Astrop Wells—writes to the resorters to that spot—also his tract called "The everlasting gospel," &c.—also to the Oxford scholars—goes into Kent—at meeting in Canterbury—taken ill—dies at Goodnestone Court—buried at Jordan's, Bucks—register—some account of those who wrote testimonies of him—G. Whitehead—S. Jennings—A. Rigge—T. Zachary—R. Jones—T. Evernden—C. Taylor—A. Parker—copy of his son's testimony—of his wife's.

In 1678, it appeared that Isaac Penington was at Astrop, which is a place in the county of Northampton, on the border of Oxfordshire, at one time frequented for its medicinal spring. The infirm state of his health was probably the occasion of the journey. At this place he wrote the following religious address to those who came thither for the purpose of drinking the waters.

"To those persons that drink of the waters at Astrop Wells."

"There is a great God, the Creator of all things, who gave man a being here in this world; to whom man must give an account when he goes out of this world."

"This great God, who loves mankind, and would not have them perish, is nigh unto man, to teach him the fear which is due from him to God."

"The man that learns this pure fear of God, is daily exercised by it in departing from evil, both in thought,

word, and deed, and in doing that which is good in his sight."

"There is likewise another teacher near man, who is also ready to teach such, who do not know God or fear God, that which is dishonourable to the great God: who made man to be a vessel of honour, and to be his glory."

"They that learn of this teacher, learn not to fear God, or to do good; but to please themselves in doing evil, in thought, word, and deed."

"Oh! what account will such give when they go out of this world, and come to be judged by the great God (who is of pure eyes, and cannot behold iniquity,) when their sins are set in order by Him before them, and just judgment proportioned by Him thereunto?"

"Oh! why do men forget God, their Creator, days without number; hearkening to him who first deceived them; doing the will of the deceiver; and not the will of the blessed Creator and Saviour?"

"O! hearken to wisdom's counsel, when she cries, in the streets of your hearts, against that which is evil, and contrary to the nature, life, and will of God: lest a day of calamity from God come upon you; and then ye cry unto the pitiful and tender God, and his bowels be turned against you, and He refuse to shew mercy to you. Read Prov. i. 20, to the end of the chapter; and the Lord give you the weight, consideration, and true understanding of it, for your soul's good, and for the reclaiming of you from any thing that is evil, and destructive to your souls."

"This is written in tender love to you, from one who pities and loves you, and desires your prosperity in this world, and your everlasting happiness with God for ever."

"I. P."

"Astrop, 15th 6th month, 1678."

Here also he wrote a short piece entitled "The everlasting Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessed effects thereof, testified to from experience;" a worthy theme for one who had all his life long been endeavouring to conform to it; and which is peculiarly emphatic from the pen of a man, who in such a pursuit had well nigh finished his course. It is said by the evangelist, speaking of his heavenly master, "Having loved his own, He loved them unto the end." This was probably said with reference to the approaching end of that outward appearance which John was describing; but I trust it will still hold good as relating to the entire life of such as have persevered in the faith and patience of Jesus; consonant with that other scripture, to be found in the Hebrews, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." By this means, his own, his faithful, his redeemed ones (and who may not, by co-operating with his grace, become such?) are still bringing forth to the end, the fruits of his love. "They shall be fat and flourishing," saith the Psalmist, "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

This small piece does not wear the aspect of controversy, or enter into argument; but is principally declaratory. Yet it appears that it was intended for the benefit of the Papists. Thus it is wound up. "This opened in me, this morning, in love and compassion towards the Papists. My bowels have often rolled over them, and been pained concerning them, to see how they are closed and shut up as to the true sense and understanding of things of this nature. Oh! that they would prize the day of their visitation, that they might hear the sound of life, both from others, and also in their own hearts, and the saving arm of the Lord might be inwardly revealed to them, and they effectually redeemed thereby!" But here comes another touch of the love which hopeth all things,—"I am no disdainer of Papists, or any sort of Protestants, nay, not of Turks or Jews; but a mourner because of their several mis-

takes, and a breather to the God of my life, for tender mercy towards them all."

"Astrop, 13th of the 7th month, 1678."

This appears to have been the last tract published in the life time of this industrious writer; but we find a letter, extant only in manuscript, dated from Oxford the 23d of the 7th month, addressed to some scholars of that university, who had behaved rudely at a meeting where Isaac Penington was present; probably on his return from Astrop. It may be suitable to insert it here.

"To the Scholars that disturb Friends, in their meetings at Oxford."

"I heard such jeering yesterday, at *Being moved by the Spirit of God*, as indeed grieved me; because I was and am sensible of the great hurt it doth to those that give scope to themselves therein. Now, I entreat such to consider, doth not Christ say, 'It is the Spirit that quickens?' Is not man dead in trespasses and sins, till the Lord quicken him to life, by his Holy Spirit? And when the soul is in any measure made alive, doth it not feel the want of God's Spirit to keep it alive, and to add life to it? And is not this the great thing, the soul cries to God for, even that Spirit whereby alone it can live to God, and be preserved alive before Him? Did not David pray to God that the Lord would quicken and uphold him by his free Spirit? And again, 'Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me?' And did not Christ say, relating to the similitude of parents, 'If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask Him?' And they that ask the Spirit of Him, when He gives it, will they not gladly receive it? And when it is received, will it not move them unto good, and

against evil; and ought not they to wait to be moved by it? Doth not the natural life and spirit move in the natural body; and shall not the spiritual life live and move in the inward man; and they which are truly alive be moved and guided by it? They that have not the Spirit of God, are they his? And they that have his Spirit, is it not a Spirit of light, of life, of righteousness, of holiness, of grace, of truth, &c.; and ought not all the children of the light and of the truth, to wait for its motions, that they may follow its leadings and guidings? Did not the Christians of old live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh? And ought not all the Christians now to do also? 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' O! wait, that ye may experience those things; and do not disturb or deride others in their waiting upon God, to experience those things even now, and more; who cannot but mourn and pray for you, while ye are doing towards them that which ye ought not. The Lord give you rightly to wait for true understanding; that ye may receive it from Him in these and all other things that concern your everlasting welfare."

"This is in true love and good-will to you, from him who wisheth well to your souls; even that ye may know, partake of, and rejoice in God's salvation."

"I. P."

"Oxford, 23d of 7th month, 1678."

The following year he took a journey with his wife into Kent; and one of the last meetings that he attended was in Canterbury. A Friend who was present, speaks of that meeting, and of another wherein his public labours closed, as follows:—"Glad I am that it was my lot to be with him, the two last meetings that he was at, the first of which was in the city of Canterbury. I being at that time very weak in body, and it lay upon

me from the Lord to go to the meeting, where I found him together with Friends waiting in silence upon the Lord. And when I had sat down among them, O! the mighty power of the Lord God that descended upon us; so that I could say the fountain of the great deep was opened; and O! the powerful, pleasant, and crystal streams, how did they abundantly flow into our hearts! And his cup was made to overflow, to the watering and refreshing of the tender-hearted; so that God did make me a witness of the seal of his testimony, with many more, at those two last meetings."

The property of Mary Penington lay in that county, and after having been among their tenants they spent some time at Goodnestone-court, one of her farms in the parish of that name.* On the day fixed for his return towards his habitation, he became ill, and after a week's illness, was removed from this scene of suffering. His disorder was sharp and painful: but the anguish gave no disturbance to that internal peace, which was so firmly established before it attacked him; but he died, as he had lived, in the faith that overcomes the world.† His remains were taken into Buckinghamshire, and interred in the burying-ground belonging to his beloved friends of Chalfont, at Jordan's near Beaconsfield. The record of this event is to be seen in the monthly meeting register as follows, "Isaac Penington of Woodside, in the parish of Amersham, in the county of Bucks, minister of the everlasting gospel, departed this life at Goodneston, next Faversham, in the county of Kent, on the 8th of the 8th month, 1679, and was buried at Jordan's, in the parish of Giles's-Chalfont, in the county of Bucks." Thus closed the life of Isaac Pen-

* Probably Goodwinstone, near Faversham, as Goodnestone and Goodwinstone would both by the usual rapidity of speech, be pronounced Good'nston.

† Penn's Testimony.

ington, at about the age of sixty-three. He was not what is usually termed an old man, but he was probably old in constitution, a weakly constitution impaired by sorrow and by sufferings, and he seems to have been peculiarly endowed with the old age of an unspotted life. "Wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."

The time he professed himself a member of the despised people called Quakers was about twenty years. That he was in much esteem with them appears from the number of his brethren who have commemorated him with written memorials, in testimony of their sense of his worth. George Fox, William Penn, George Whitehead, Samuel Jennings, Ambrose Rigge, Thomas Zachary, Robert Jones, Thomas Evernden, Christopher Taylor, Thomas Ellwood, and Alexander Parker,* all

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* George Fox, William Penn, and Thomas Ellwood, are characters well known. George Whitehead was one of the early converts to Friends' principles. In his youth he travelled as a minister and suffered much. He afterwards fixed his residence chiefly at London, and was much occupied in soliciting relief from the executive government for his suffering brethren. He was also, next to George Fox, the most voluminous writer; but his works have never been collected. He died in 1722-3, aged about eighty six. His journal entitled, "The Christian Progress of that ancient Servant and Minister of Jesus Christ, George Whitehead." &c. is an octavo volume of upwards of 700 pages, fraught with information, and almost indispensible for such as wish to become fully acquainted with the history of the Society.

Samuel Jennings was a countryman of Isaac Penington, and resided at Aylesbury, but afterwards went to live in New Jersey; where he was speaker of the Assembly. He is the author of a controversial tract or two relating to the affair of George Keith.

Ambrose Rigge was of Gatton, and afterwards of Reigate, in Surry, an eminent Friend in his time, the author of several tracts, one of which, namely, "A brief and serious Warning to such as are concerned in Commerce and trading," has been several times printed, and is I believe still in print. He died in 1704. He was several years imprisoned at Horsham in Sussex. In Surry he was excommunicated in 1674, imprisoned in 1676, and in 1683 prosecu-

gave forth testimonies of this sort, which are prefixed to the several editions of Isaac Penington's works, besides those of his widow and of his son. The two latter,

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ted in the Exchequer for eleven months' absence from the national worship, on the statute, for twenty pounds per month.

Thomas Zachary was of London, where he died in 1686. He was imprisoned, by the oath of perjured informers, on the Conventicle act, in Aylesbury gaol, where, although the perjury was proved, he was entrapped by the oath of allegiance and lay about two years. One of the convicted informers went to him in the gaol, and on his knees begged him to intercede for the mitigation of the punishment of perjury; with which the innocent man complied, showing his forgiving, Christian spirit. There are three small pieces of his writing.

Of Robert Jones we know little, but that he was a fellow-prisoner with I. P. in 1660, being arrested by armed men at a meeting, by order of the persecuting Earl of Bridgewater, and committed to prison for refusing the oath. It is also possible he was the R. J. imprisoned at Newbury, in 1684, for the same cause.

Thomas Evernden or Everden, was probably of Canterbury. He was imprisoned there in 1660, having been taken at a meeting. In 1663 he was excommunicated for not attending the national worship.—Besse's Sufferings, vol. i.

Christopher Taylor has already been noticed, at page 78. He was of Yorkshire, but afterwards kept a school at Waltham Abbey, and next at Edmonton. In 1661 he was imprisoned at Aylesbury, for being at a meeting, when probably his acquaintance with Isaac Penington began. It is probable he was then travelling in the south, as he is called C. T. of Yorkshire. I do not find that he was much molested during his residence in Essex. He died in Pennsylvania in 1686, having been a member of William Penn's council.

Alexander Parker was also a Yorkshire man, but came to London, where he died in 1682-3. He published several tracts. He was imprisoned in 1664 three months in Newgate, having been arrested whilst speaking in a meeting at Mile-End Green, and in 1664 he was fined twenty pounds for preaching. He was one of those liberated from the King's bench in 1685, by James II. so that he must have been again imprisoned. He was an eminent man, and a coadjutor to George Whitehead in applications to persons in power, for relief to Friends.

from persons who lived as it were in his bosom, I propose to insert. It is natural for surviving relations and friends to dwell upon the excellencies of a departed acquaintance; but it seems proper for the reader of these memorials, and the care is congenial to Isaac Penington's wishes and practice, to ascribe all to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights and of spirits;" and the best temper in which to consider the virtues of the pious, is praise to the Almighty in whose strength they were strong.

The testimony of John Penington, the son, is as follows;

"The Testimony of John Penington, to his dear and deceased father, Isaac Penington.

"Give me leave also to express my sense of him, seeing I have been no small sharer in the loss.—A man that had known the depths of Satan, and had a stock to lose, before he could embrace Truth in the simplicity of it: yet came forth in clearness: which is the more remarkable, inasmuch as few came near him in those bright openings and piercing wisdom he was endued with in those days, whereby he struck at all false foundations and professions, and saw their shortness and the very thing they wanted. So that when I have taken a view of his former writings, and beheld the glory he once had, and withal reflected on his present condition, on his poverty, on his nothingness, on his self-denial, and self-abasement: how little he esteemed all his former knowledge, and sights of the heavenly things themselves, in comparison of the more excellent knowledge he afterwards received, and how he could be a fool for Christ's sake; the thing hath affected me, and not a little, many times. O! he was not one that could deck himself, or desired to appear before men, or his very brethren; but ever chose to be more to the Lord than to men.

And when any have been deeply reached, through his tender, yet searching, lively testimony, O how great was his care that none might look out too much at the instrument, or receive truth in the affectionate part! He was also a meek man, and very loving; courteous to all: ready to serve his very enemies and persecutors; of whom some, from an ill opinion of him, were gained to love and esteem him. And wherever he entered into a friendship with any, he was constant. Whatever provocations he might afterwards receive from any of them, he could not let go his hold; but ever retained a good-will towards them, and an earnest desire for their welfare. I have also observed, where he hath been engaged on Truth's behalf to rebuke any sharply, who were declining from their first love, and deviating from the truth as it is in Jesus, it hath been with so much reluctancy, and averseness to his natural temper, as I never discerned the like in any: and herein I am not alone. So that it may be safely said he never used the rod, but with bowels to reclaim: and in the love was drawn to smite what the purest love could not suffer to go unrebuked. What he was in the church of God for exemplariness, for deep travail, for sound judgment, and heavenly ministry, I know, not a few are very sensible of. And have not I seen his cup many times overflow, and him so filled that the vessel was scarce able to contain? O! it was delightful to me to be with him (as it was often my lot) in his service on Truth's account! And my cry is, that I may walk worthy of so dear a parent, so unwearied and earnest a traveller [travailer] for mine and others' eternal well-being, and so faithful and eminent a labourer in God's Vineyard; who is now gone to his rest in a good day, having first seen the effects of the travail of his soul, and been satisfied in the Lord. But he hath left us, his children, behind, for whom he hath often prayed, and besought the Lord with tears, 'That we might walk in his steps, and our father's God might be our God, and that the blessings of our father's life might descend upon us;'

and we are still, after much weakness, upon the stage of this world; which, that it may be so rightly improved, that we may walk worthy of the manifold visitations we have had from him in particular, and many faithful labourers in general, is the incessant desire of him that hopes, with thankfulness to the Lord, to reverence his memory, as well as that he honours him in the relation of a dear and tender father.

"JOHN PENINGTON."

"The 9th of 3d month, 1681."

This testimony has a postscript, from which was extracted the account of Isaac Penington's decease already mentioned.

This testimony of the son seems a plain man's tribute of sincere affection to the memory of a kind father; and shews that the deceased had secured, what it should be the aim of all parents to secure, the love and respect of his children. The wife, writing under still deeper impressions, after the dissolution of a tie more than conjugal, and at an earlier period of her separation from her bosom companion, becomes almost poetic. Her testimony is a song and an elegy, not, however in the plaintive language of disconsolation, but fraught with images which excite admiration, and with the consoling balm of acquiescence in the disposition of Providence.

Thus she breaks forth——"Whilst I keep silent touching thee, O thou blessed of the Lord and his people, my heart burneth within me. I must make mention of thee, for thou wast a most pleasant plant of renown, planted by the right hand of the Lord; and 'thou tookest deep rooting downwards, and sprangest upward.' The dew of heaven fell on thee, and made thee fruitful, and thy fruit was of a fragrant smell, and most delightful. O! where shall I begin to recount the Lord's remarkable dealings with thee! He set his love on thee, O thou one of the Lord's peculiar choice, to place his name on. Wast not thou sanctified in the

womb? Thy very babish days declared of what stock and lineage thou wert. Thou desiredst after 'the sincere milk of the word, as a new-born babe,' even in the bud of thy age. O! who can declare how thou hast travelled towards the holy land, in thy very infancy as to days! O! who can tell what thy soul hath felt in thy travel! O! thou wast gotten to be in the mount with the Lord, and his spiritual Moses, when the princes and elders saw but his back parts, and feared, and quaked to hear the terrible thunderings in mount Sinai. The breast of consolation was held out to thee early, and thou suckedst thy fill, till the vessel could no longer contain: for thou couldst not in that fulness, 'see God and live' in this tabernacle; so that thou besoughtest the Lord to abate this exceeding excellent glory, and give thee such a measure as was food convenient. O! the heavenly, bright, living openings that were given to thee many years past! His light shone round about thee, and the book of the creatures was opened to thee, and his mysteries (made known to holy men of old, who spoke them forth as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost) were made known to thee, to discern. Such a state as I have never known any in, in that day, have I heard thee declare of. O! this did it please the Lord to withdraw and shut up as in one day; and so leave thee desolate and mourning many a day: weary of the night and of the day: poor and naked, sad, distressed and bowed down. Thou refusedst to be comforted because it was a time of night and not day; and because He that was gone was not come. His time of manifesting His love was not at hand, but He was as a stranger, or one gone into a far country, not ready to return; and thou wouldst accept of no beloved in his absence; but testifiedst that He thy soul longed for was not in this or that observation, nay, nor opening; but thy beloved, when He came, would sit as a refiner's fire, and would come with 'his fan in his hand, and thoroughly purge his floor.' No likeness, or appearance, or taking sound of words, or visions, or revelations, wouldst thou take up

with, instead of him that was life indeed. O! the many years thou puttest thy mouth in the dust, and wentest softly and bowed down, and hadst anguish of soul, weeping and groaning, panting and sighing! O! who can tell the one half of the bitterness of thy soul! Because substance was in thine eye, all shadows did fly away from before thee. Thou couldst not feed on that which was not bread from heaven."

"In this state I married thee; and my love was drawn to thee, because I found thou sawest the deceit of all notions, and layest as one that refused to be comforted by any thing that had the appearance of religion, till He came to his temple, who is truth and no lie. For all those shows of religion, were very manifest to thee, so that thou wert sick and weary of them all. And in this, my heart cleft to thee, and a desire was in me to be serviceable to thee in this desolate condition; for thou wast alone and miserable in this world, and I gave up much to be a companion to thee in this thy suffering. O! my sense, my sense of thee and thy state in that day, even makes me as one dumb, for the greatness of it is beyond my capacity to utter."

"This little testimony, to thy hidden life, my dear and precious one, in a day and time when none of the Lord's gathered people knew thy face, nor were in any measure acquainted with thy many sorrows and deep wounds and distresses, have I stammered out; that it might not be forgotten that thou wast in the land of the living, and thy fresh springs were in God, and light was on thy Goshen, when thick darkness covered the people. But now that the day is broken forth, and thou wert so eminently gathered into it, and a faithful publisher of it, I leave this bright state of thine to be declared of by the sons of the morning, who have been witnesses of the rising of that bright star of righteousness in thee, and its guiding thee to the Saviour, even Jesus, the First and the Last. They, I say, who were strong, and have overcome the evil one, and are fathers in Israel, have declared of thy life in God, and have pub-

lished it in many testimonies here to the glorious, saving Truth, that thou wert partaker of, livedst, and passedst hence in, as in a fiery chariot, into the eternal habitation, with the holy saints, prophets, and apostles of Jesus."

"Ah me! he is gone! he that none exceeded in kindness, in tenderness, in love inexpressible to the relation as a wife. Next to the love of God in Christ Jesus to my soul, was his love precious and delightful to me. My bosom one; that was as my guide and counsellor! my pleasant companion! my tender, sympathising friend! as near to the sense of my pain, sorrow, grief and trouble, as it was possible! Yet this great help and benefit is gone; and I, a poor worm, a very little one to him, compassed about with many infirmities, through mercy let him go without an unadvised word of discontent, or inordinate grief. Nay, further, such was the great kindness of the Lord showed to me in that hour, that my spirit ascended with him in that very moment that his spirit left his body; and I saw him safe in his own mansion, and rejoiced with him, and was at that instant gladder of it, than ever I was of enjoying him in the body. And from this sight my spirit returned again to perform my duty to his outward tabernacle, to the answer of a good conscience.

"This testimony to dear Isaac Penington, is from the greatest loser of all that had a share in his life,

"MARY PENINGTON."

"This was written at my house at Woodside, the 27th of the Second month, 1680, between twelve and one at night, whilst I was watching with my sick child."

CHAP. VI.

Account of his widow—her state of mind—her daughter Gulielma Penn—laid up with a fever at Edmonton—her state of mind when ill, and ailing—her fear of death removed—dies at Worminghurst, Sussex.

Mary Penington did not very long survive her husband. It is probable the ruin of the estate of Isaac Penington, had been the means of encumbering that of his wife. We find her writing thus in the year 1680. "Now the Lord hath seen good to make me a widow, and leave me in a desolate condition, as to my guide and companion; but He hath also mercifully disentangled me as to my worldly affairs, and I am in a very easy state. I have often desired of the Lord to make way for my waiting upon Him without distraction, and living to Him free from all encumbrances; therefore I most thankfully, in a deep sense of his gracious and kind dealings, receive the disposing of my possessions from Him. And now, through the kindness of the Lord, I have cleared my estate of great part of the mortgage, and paid most of my bond-debts, so that I can easily compass my affairs. And, this Fourth month, 1680, I have made my will, leaving a handsome provision for my children, besides a sufficiency to pay my debts and legacies."——"These things being settled, my mind is at liberty: and in regard to my outward condition and habitation, every thing is to my heart's content. Having no great family, I live retired, and have leisure to apply my heart unto wisdom: yet I am at times mourning the loss of my worthy companion, and [am] also exercised by the great sickness and weakness of my

children."—"I am sensible of death and have no desire for life, feeling a satisfaction that I leave my children in an orderly way; and that they have less need of me than when my affairs were entangled." It may be remarked that her eldest daughter, by her former husband, had been about eight years married to William Penn. It is probable that he had received with her the estate of Worminghurst in Sussex, where he appears to have been residing when he set out, in 1677, for his travels in Holland and Germany; yet one expression of his renders it dubious. "The next day I went to my *own* mother's in Essex." This seems to denote that Worminghurst still belonged to Mary Penington; yet on his return he says, "I went to Worminghurst, my house in Sussex."

Some time after settling her outward affairs, Mary Penington went to visit her younger children, then at school at Edmonton; and was there laid up with a fever, which had the appearance of proving mortal. She thus describes her condition. "It pleased the Lord—to visit me with a violent, burning fever, beyond any I had felt since I was born. Indeed it was very tedious, insomuch that I made my moan in these doleful words, Distress! Distress! feeling that those words comprehended sickness, uneasiness, want of rest, ill accommodations in the place, together with the continual noise of the school, and but little attendance, and the thought of being so far from home, where I should not have wanted any alleviation that could be procured."—"I had scarce time or ability in all this illness, to have spent a quarter of an hour in settling my worldly affairs, if they had been to do; but such was the kindness and mercy of the Lord to me, that He put it into my heart to consider, that it might so happen that I should not return home, as it was with my dear husband; that so I might be prepared to wait on the Lord in my sickness, and, if it was his will, to lay down this body, without any distraction from outward concerns. These memorable dealings of the Lord with me, I now recount, in

an humble sense of his mercy: being in my bed, unrecovered of my forementioned illness, which has now been of about three months' continuance." Thus did this pious woman appear to obey the apostolic injunction, "In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."—But hear her go on, "And now it is in my heart, in the holy fear of the Lord, to declare to you, my dear children, of what service it is to me in my sickness, that I have nothing to do, but to die. For the Lord was pleased to assure me of his favour, and that I should not go down to the pit with the wicked, but should have a mansion, according to his good pleasure, in his holy habitation: the knowledge of which kept me in a quiet frame, free from the sting of death, and without the least desire to live. Yet I did not witness any measure of triumph or joy; nevertheless I could often say, It is enough, in that I am still, and have not a thought day or night, of any thing that is to be done, in preparation for my going hence." These consoling declarations were written at home, whither she had, though ill, been able to arrive about eleven weeks after the attack of fever at Edmonton; but it seems clear that she had been previously unwell, for in another writing dated two months after this, she speaks of the duration of illness as of nearly a year; and there is ground to believe that the stone was one of the means of her bodily affliction. "This morning," (says she, 27th Fourth month, 1681), "as I was waiting on the Lord with some of my family, I found an inclination in my mind to mention the continuance of my illness unto this day; which from the time of my being first visited with it, wants not many weeks of a year: in all which time, such was the goodness of the Lord to me, that, as it was said of Job, 'In all this he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly,' so I may say, through the presence of his power with me. In all this time I have not felt a murmuring nor complaining mind. But this hath been my constant frame, It is well. I have

no grievous things to undergo, except in these late fits of the stone, which have been full of anguish and misery; in which time of extreme suffering, I have earnestly cried to the Lord for help and direction for means of removing my pain. These seasons excepted, I have not asked any thing of the Lord concerning life or health; but have rather felt a satisfaction in being debarred of every thing that might be acceptable to my senses. The Lord hath graciously stopped my desires after every pleasant thing, so that I have not been uneasy in this my long confinement; for the most part to my bed, and to this present day to my chamber; in which I have had but little comfort either from food or sleep. Yet I am not solicitous for health or strength, the relish of my food or refreshment from rest; nor yet for ability to walk about my house, or into the air, to take a view of the beautiful creation: because in this tried state I have been near to the Lord, with much less distraction than when I was in health. And many times I have said within myself, Oh! this is very sweet and easy, thus to witness the Lord to make my bed in my sickness; and hold my eyes waking to converse with him!—Death has been many times before me. I have rather entreated it, than shrunk from it, having generally found in my spirit a kind of yielding to die; as it is sometimes expressed, 'He yielded up the ghost.'

"My mind has been" [was] "attended with fearful apprehensions of death all my days, I may say, till I came to be settled in the Truth, and lived under a happy subjection to it: but now the fear of death, that is, as to my state after death, is at this present removed: but there remains a deep sense of that passage, how hard, strait, and difficult, it is many times, even to those over whom the second death hath no power."

It however doth not appear that this sickness ended in her dissolution, at least that it was the

means of confining her for the remainder of her time, to the house. She lived more than a year after this, and departed at Worminghurst in Sussex, the 18th of the Seventh month, 1682. It is probable her remains also were interred at Jordan's, as her decease is registered in the same register as that of her husband.

A

REVIEW

OF THE

WRITINGS

OF

ISAAC PENINGTON.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART 1.

A Review of those published before he joined the Society of Friends.

PART 2.

A Review of those which he published after that period, or which have been published in the Collection of his Works since his decease.

REVIEW,

&c.

PART. I.

Review of the writings of Isaac Penington before he became a member of the Society of Friends.

It has been said that Isaac Penington commenced author, before he commenced a professor with the Society of Friends. The following pieces of his issued from the press prior to that event.

1. A touchstone or tryall of faith by the originall from whence it springs, and the root out of which it grows: held out by way of exposition of the 12 and 13 verses of the first chapter of John's gospel, and of the six former verses of the third chapter, which treat expressly about this point: intended not for the disquiet of any, but for the eternall rest and peace of all, to whom the Lord shall please to make it useful thereunto. To which is added, the spirituall practice of Christians in the primitive times. 4to. 1648.

Our author was then about thirty-two years old. The texts upon which he descanted, as well as his manner of explaining them, indicate that a preparation of

heart had then begun in him, for the reception of the doctrines of a people who have so much relinquished outward ceremonies as Friends have done. The two verses of John i. are thus: "But as many as received Him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The other passage is part of the remarkable conference of our Lord with Nicodemus; in opening which, Isaac Penington thus explains the being "born of water," or rather what is meant by water. "By water," says he, "is meant the knowledge of God in Christ, the sight of God in the face of Christ, wherein eternall life consists. 'If thou hadst known the gift of God, &c. thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water,' &c. John iv. 10. What is this living water? Why 'this is life eternall, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' John xvii. 3. The heavenly doctrine of life and salvation is often expressed in scripture by this tearm of Water. 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew.' Deut. xxxii. 2. and Isa. lv. 10. Heb. vi. 7. As God is the fountain, whence all the life and sweetnesse of the creature flows, whether naturall (Isa. lxv. 9.), or spirituall (Jer. ii. 13.), so those beames of eternall light, those streamings forth of life, which issue out from God, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they are waters from this fountaine. 2. What is it to be born of water? It notes that fundamental and radicall change, which is made in the heart by the power of the truths of Christ, conveyed thither, and working there," which he goes on to describe more at large.—Water, thus defined, being the means of regeneration, he describes the Spirit as the agent who applies them. Thus he seemed then to have made a near approach to the tenets, in which he afterwards lived and died.—The spiritual practice of Christians in the primitive times, is drawn from Ephes.

iv. 2. as consisting in humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, and forbearing one another in love.

His next piece has this singular title:

2. The great and sole troubler of the times, represented in a mapp of miserie: or a glimps at the heart of man, which is the fountain from whence all misery flows, and the source into which it runs back. Drawn with a dark pencil, by a dark hand, in the midst of darkness. 4to. 1649.

It is a discourse, systematically arranged on Jer. xvii. 9, 10. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins." The preface turns upon the propensity of parties and persons, to detect each other's faults and to overlook their own. The body of the work shows the pride, covetousness, envy, unrighteousness, enmity, cruelty, unbelief, and hypocrisy, that prevail in the hearts of men.

Our author's next piece of which we have an account, and of which copies remain, is

3. A voyce out of the thick darkness; containing in it a few words to Christians, about the late and present posture of spiritual affairs among them: together with a postscript about darkening the counsel of God: as also some scripture-prophecies concerning some transactions in the later times. 4to. 1650.

A specimen of this work has already been given at page 14. In the title-page of this work he calls himself Isaac Penington (junior), Esq. which title is also in several other of his books; but dropped when he became a Friend. It is a title that is now lavished on persons having no claim to it, and with little distinction;

but which, I think, should not be assumed by Friends, above all men. It is supposed to be derived from *scutifer*, through the French word *écuyer;* and it is generally rendered in law-latin, *armiger*. Thus its military cast renders it peculiarly unsuitable for us.

The next piece also has a remarkable title.

4. Light or darkness, displaying or hiding itself, as it pleaseth, and from or to whom it pleaseth: arraigning, judging, condemning, both the shame and glory of the creature, in all its several breakings forth from, and appearances in, the creature: held forth to publike view in a sermon, a letter, and several other openings. 4to. 1650.

With reference to this are the pieces called

5. Severall fresh inward openings (concerning severall things) which the day will declare of what nature they are, to which judgment they appeal for justice, being contented either to stand or fall by it: and being likewise ready to kiss that condemnation which they are likely to meet with in the mean time, from all sorts of men, whom they finde ready to deal hardly with them. 4to. 1650.

And

6. An Echo from the great deep, containing further inward openings, concerning divers other things, upon some whereof the principles and practices of the mad folks do much depend: as also the life, hope, safety, and happiness of the Seed of God is pointed at, which, through many dark, dismal, untrodden paths and passages (as particularly through an unthought of death and captivity) they shall at length be led unto. 4to. 1650.

These appear to be deep cogitations in a deeply exercised mind; and often expressed in terms at which even the pious at this day would revolt, and which the wise would contemn. But it seems to be the author's object to lay in the dust all the wisdom, as well as all the righteousness of man, that immoveable and eternal righteousness may be produced and remain. In a superficial glance over these pieces (for I do not pretend to have read them through), the following short definition claimed my attention. "To trust God with all one is, or hopes, for ever, this is true faith." In another place the undermentioned thoughts occur. "O shallow man, when wilt thou cease measuring God by the eye of thy reason? Wilt thou say it must be thus and thus, because thou canst not see how it can be otherwise?" ——A proper query for the great reasoners of this age! We may also find another beautiful definition of faith. "Faith is the divine instinct of the new nature in the new creature; whereby it naturally knoweth, and goeth forth towards God as its centre."——"O man," says he in another place, "Behold thy Saviour. Know thy life. Do not despise eternity, because of its appearing in, and acting through, mortality. This is He who came to redeem thee, to be a propitiatory sacrifice for thee, and a pattern to thee. Art thou able to measure God in any work of his, through the creature? Thou knowest thou art not. Then why dost thou measure him so confidently in his greatest work, through his Christ, even the work of redemption, and so apparently contradict him in it?" The mere man of reason would probably charge all these writings with mysticism. It is probable that they will find the most ready answer in the mind that has undergone the deepest hidden distress. The last of them, however, seems the most free from the unusual style which pervades the two former and may probably have been written when the author's broken spirit was in some degree again bound up.

7. The fundamental right, safety, and liberty of the people (which is radically in themselves, derivatively in the parliament, their substitutes or representatives) briefly asserted. Wherein is discovered the great good or harm which may accrue unto the people by parliaments, according to their different temperature and motions. Together with some proposals conducing towards an equal and just settlement of the distracted state of this nation: as likewise a touch at some especial properties of a supream good governor or governors. 4to. 1651.

Of this tract a few extracts have been given in the course of these memoirs, pp. 16 to 17, in order to show the benevolence and moderation of the author in matters relating to government. As, in his day, as well as in preceding and succeeding times, governments have assumed to themselves the regulating of religion, one more quotation may not be improper to shew Isaac Penington's manner of speaking on that subject, before he had fallen under the oppression of laws made to coerce the liberty of conscience. He is speaking of two kinds of employment unsuitable for parliaments. "The one is," says he, "meddling with spiritual affairs. The constituting of these, the amending of these, the altering of these, is only proper to such as are invested with spiritual authority. The laws of Christ were never appointed to be set up by the power of man; but by the power of his Spirit in the conscience. It is accounted profane, and much startled at, to touch that which *man* hath made holy, which *man* hath separated and consecrated to divine use; and yet how propense are almost all persons to be laying hands on that which *God hath made holy and set apart for himself!*"

The life of a Christian, which is a lamp kindled and lighted from the love of Christ, and most naturally

discovereth its original, by the purity, integrity, and fervency of its motion, in love to its fellow-partners in the same life: briefly displayed in this its peculiar, and distinguishing strain of operation. Also some few catechistical questions concerning the way of salvation by Christ. Together with a postscript about religion. 4to. 1653.

A part of this is a diffuse exposition of some of those passages in the 14th and 15th chap. of John, which relate to love. The author, noticing the sort of love enjoined to Christians, "As I have loved you," attempts to describe the love of Christ to man, as to its intensity, purity, and the peculiarity of its seeking out its enemies. He shows the profitableness of this love; and gives some directions for the attainment. I am somewhat struck with the following lines near the conclusion. "There is yet a more excellent way, and more excellent things than are now thought of, which will be manifested in due time. But it is very dangerous striving to ascend up to them aforehand: the sweetest and safest way is to wait the season of their descent. The deep sense of the want whereof, with an assured expectation, and quiet waiting and groaning for, is the best strain of religion, of the purest stamp, of any I know extant."

In the postscript, I meet with one of those passages, which show that the profession of religion under which Isaac Penington at length settled, was not altogether a strange and novel thing to him. Speaking of the difference of the light which the primitive Christians had, from that which satisfied the professors of his time, he says, "We reason ourselves into truths and practices, as any other man might do. I do not say that this should not be done; for the human spirit is to go along, and to have its own light with it too; but I cannot but say, that this is not enough."

9. A considerable question about government (of very

great importance in reference to the state of the present times) briefly discussed. With a necessary advice to the governors and governed. 4to. 1653.—1 sheet.

The author thus states his question. "The question is this: Which is better, both for the good, safety and welfare, both of the governors and governed, Absolute, or Limited authority?"

"Absoluteness is a full power of government without interruption, without rendering an account, residing in the breast, will, or conscience of the governor or governors."

"Limitation is a circumscribing of this power within such certain bounds as the people, for whose sake and benefit government is, shall think fit to confine it unto, for their good and security."

After showing the benefit of absolute government from its prompt execution, and ready remedy for unforeseen evils; and on the other hand its proneness to degenerate into tyranny, he gives it as the plain result, that "Absoluteness is best in itself, but limitations are safest for the present condition of man." His advice to the governors is, "That they undertake not to bring forth that which is not in them:" showing how the Long Parliament had failed; and doubting the army, then in power. His advice to the governed is, "Expect not that fruit from your governors, the root of which is not in them. Did man ever bring forth righteousness and peace? Have ye not yet had enough of looking for reformation and amendment of things, from this or that party?" Finally he shows that nothing but the Spirit of Christ can settle the nation.—It is a lively little piece.

10. Divine Essays, or considerations about several things in Religion of very deep and weighty concernment, both in reference to the state of the present

times, as also of the Truth itself. With a lamenting and pleading postscript. 4to. 1654. 17 sheets.

These essays are divided into the following sections; "1. Of knowledge in general. 2. Scripture knowledge. 3. Radical or original knowledge. 4. Of the Word, the Spirit, and faith, under each administration, both that of the law, and that of the gospel, with a hint at their further tendency. 5. Some few observations touching the principles of the Ranters. 6. Of the various false new births and the true one, which are distinguished by their root and nature. 7. Of the true nature and vertue of the kingdom of God. 8. Of the weakness, uncertainty and invalidity of the flesh, in reference to the things of God. 9. Of the certainty of Christ, in his knowledge concerning the things of God, and particularly of his well grounded testimony concerning the way to life; and consequently of the certainty of the knowledge and testimony of his seed in their generations, they being of the same life and nature with Him. 10. Of the liberty of the kingdom, which was outward and shadowy in that dispensation of the gospel by Christ and his apostles; but inward and substantial, both before, then, and after that dispensation, yea, and for ever: which liberty, although it be very large, yet is limited by the law of its own life and nature. 11. Of the low ebb, which the Lord Christ was brought to, by his death and sufferings. 12. Of the low estate, which the seed of Christ are reduced to, by their death and sufferings. 13. The course and end of man. 14. The happy end of the holy nature and course of the Seed of life, which the Spirit of life, through all the various dark paths of sin, death and misery, most faithfully guideth it unto; or, The sweet and happy end of the righteous."

It is probable that there will appear in the tenth head, an incongruous expression. I refer to the word shadowy, as applied to the gospel.

In the following passage, taken from the postscript,

the author appears to have made a near approach to that faith, in which he afterwards lived and finished his course.

"O consider this, if ye love your souls! It is not a building upon Christ after the flesh (it is not either a beleeving or obeying from any rational knowledg, from a knowledg of the understanding, though the heart and affections be never so much heated therewith, accompanying it never so vigourously) which will save any man; but *a building of a new nature upon the new nature of Christ.* It must be a building of a new nature, for Christ saveth *his* building, his people, his seed, his church; and it must be built or founded upon the new nature of Christ: for Christ himself saveth, *not according to the oldness of the letter, but according to the newness of the Spirit.*"

11.—Expositions, with observations sometimes, on severall Scriptures. Divided into four parts. 1. An exposition on Christ's sermon as it is related in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew's gospel. 2. The sum or substance of Jerusalem's song of triumph, being an exposition of the first ten verses of the second chapter of the first book of Samuel. 3. A basket of fragments, containing chiefly expositions upon particular select scriptures, somewhat promiscuously set down. 4. An exposition on the first epistle of John.—4to. 1656. about 94 sheets.

The first, second, and fourth of these divisions are on the general plan of expositors. The verse is first recited, and then the exposition; which is for the most part diffuse. The third part is written on a different plan, and has the following subdivisions;

"1. The right enterance into true wisdom. From Prov. ix. 10.

2. The true way of sight and the things most desirable to be seen. Ephes. i. 17, 18, 19.

3. The cleer light and sight of God. Psal. cxxxix. 12.

4. The first tipe of the two seeds. Gen. iv. 1 to 13.

5. The transient, yet present light. 2 Pet. i. 19.

6. Christ, the universal light. John i. 9.

7. The times of refreshment. Acts iii. 19.

8. A distinction about Orphanship. John xiv. 18.

9. The ground of the world's hatred against the seed of Christ, or the true and chief ground of persecution, which alwaies hath been and still is the ground, though it was never so acknowledged: from John xv. 19.

10. The best defence against the world or worldly spirit, which is the wisdom and innocency of the renewed spirit. Mat. x. 16.

11. Two questions concerning Christ.

12. The anointing and function of Christ. Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, 3.

13. The sweet invitation, reproof and direction of Christ, to wandering souls. Isaiah lv. 1, 2, 3.

14. The sweetness, goodness and kindness of God's nature, with its great efficacy in the day of his power. Psal. xxxvi. 7, 8, 9.

15. A Tast of the breathings, pantings, waitings, and hopes of Israel after the true Saviour, and his effectual redemption. Psal. lxxxv.

16. The two main props and pipes of Faith; viz. Knowledg and experience.

17. The distresse and perplexity of Sion; her fidelity therein, and her faithful comforter and deliverer; represented in some declarations from ch. li. of Isaiah.

18. The proper nature, and sweet benefits of afflictions. Heb. xii. 11.

19. The design and work of God in all his dispensations, with a glance at the mistery of this design and work. Ezek. xvii. 24.

20. Man's way to life rejected, and a way of a different nature made choice of by God. 1 Cor. i. 21 to 26.

21. The wisdom of God despised and rejected, even in all its appearances, by the spirit of this world; but

still justified by the light and spirit of life in his children. Matth. xi. 16 to 20.

22. Man's right temper and practice. Eccles. xii. 12, 13.

23. The severity of God against corrupt shepherds, who will rescue his flock from them. Ezek. xxxiv. 2.

24. The estate of Christ's kingdom at his coming, as it is represented in the parrable of the wise and foolish virgins. Matt. xxv. 1 to 13.

25. Brief observations on part of the first chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians; but chiefly on those verses which concern the great Rest or Salvation, and the great Trouble or Destruction, both which are, in the end, to be impartially opened and dispensed.

26. The danger of exaltation of a man's spirit over others. Matth. v. 22.

27. The conclusion, containing a brief relation concerning myself; with a faithful beam of light which may be of service to such, as are not yet translated out of the dark spirit of this world into the true light of life."

This large volume, like all Penington's early writings, is out of print, and not likely to be again edited. I have never seen more than two copies of it. As a specimen, though short and slight, of the author's manner and temper of mind, I present the reader with an extract from the 14th section of the "Basket of Fragments," entitled, "On the sweetness, goodness, and kindness of God's nature," &c. being an exposition of the 7th, 8th, and 9th verses of the 36th Psalm. The 7th verse is this: "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."

"The children of men are in a weary land, in a scorching and tempestuous country, in a city closely besieged and scanty of provision; they want shade, they want shelter, they want rescue, they want relief. The enemy persecuteth them, yea, hath seized upon their

life and is devouring it. Their precious soul is daily hunted and taken. They are made very miserable by enemies and dangers, both within and without them; which though few at present discern particularly, yet it is so plainly written in the state of all men, that he that runs may read it. For what man can fly from the death of his body? Or what man can endure or escape the pains of the death of his soul? O, how will men cry to the mountains to fall on them, and to the rocks to cover them, when once their misery approacheth! Surely, surely, very precious will be a shelter in the day of calamity! Now God hath wings, such wings as cast a shadow sufficient to shelter the sons of men from all misery. They are a proper help, a proper relief, from sin, from death, from hel, from whatsoever can affright or afflict poor miserable man. They can cover man, and keep him secure from all that can disturb him. And when once man comes to be sensible of this, to understand his own need, the sutableness of this remedy for him, and the great kindness of God in affording it him he will speedily resort unto it, 'Therefore do the children of men,' &c. *Therefore;* Because of thy kindness, because of the excellency of thy kindness, because of the openness of thy nature to that which is miserable, and which none can help. There is that in the nature of God which (were it discovered to them) the whole creation could not but trust, only it is hid from their eyes, which, necessitateth for the present this course of misery.—*Therefore;* Because of the excellency of its nature, because the children of men see the truth and fulnesse of this kindnesse; they see it to be such, as that it is impossible for it to refuse the relief of any thing that runneth to it, ('Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,') therefore do they seek shelter under it, and with confidence repose their weary souls there. Indeed, if it were but a kindness of man, though raised to never so great a degree, there were not sufficient ground to trust it."

——"But such is the nature of God, that were it but

known, it could not but be trusted. So kind is God that the greatest sinner who is most obnoxious to Him, did he but know Him, would not fear to put himself into his hands."

Isaac Penington (as is mentioned at page 28) had at one time imbibed the doctrine of election and reprobation, which, as generally understood, consigns to destruction the majority of mankind; but when he wrote the volume under review, he seems to have given up that doctrine so far, as not to be willing to allow the reprobation of any.—An account has already been given of his attainments in religion, and how all the fabric which he had reared was broken suddenly to pieces. In the conclusion of the part from which these quotations are made, he recounts this overthrow, and thus describes his state when writing. "My soul boweth down before Him, blessing his name. Good is the hand of the Lord! Most holy, righteous, sweet, and kind is his severity and wrath. But my heart and tongue are not yet prepared to speak these things. I will therefore cease, lest He judg me again for taking his name in vain. I am now a dark thing, still in the dark, being neither what I formerly was, nor yet formed into a vessel by the potter; nor yet perfectly broken (though to my own sence perfectly broken long ago): and very little made up."

Another touch or two extracted from another part of this large volume, namely, the "Exposition on Christ's Sermon," may form an agreeable addition to the foregoing.

"*As we forgive our debtors.*] This is a strong argument with the Father, to move Him to forgive, and to the child, to believe its pardon. He that hath taught us to forgive, will He not forgive us? Can we find a readiness in our spirits, to remit the offences of others; and can we possibly imagine that God can want it? Certainly He that hath wrought this in us, hath also left it remaining in himself. He to whom God hath given a spirit of forgiving, who cannot but forgive those who

offend him, may well expect to reap the same measure from God; whose nature engageth Him more to forgive his children, than any nature derived from Him can teach any to forgive such as injure and provoke them. He who finds this wrought in him, hath strong ground to believe that God himself cannot but bear the same temper of spirit in himself, towards him, which He hath wrought in him towards others."

Again, from ch. 7.

"*Judge not.*] Observ. A judging temper is not fit for a disciple, in the eye of Christ. Judging is not an action beseeming a disciple: is not such an action as Christ alloweth in him."

"There are two things exceeding lovely in a disciple, both whereof this is contrary unto. The first is, *A brokenness of spirit in himself, for his own vileness.* Though a man be pardoned for his sin: yet the sight of what he was, the remembrance of what was blotted out in him (nay of what is still in him and upon him, further than the Lord pleaseth of his own free goodness to blot it out continually), should keep him very low in his own eyes; even as low as if he were still lying under the guilt and condemnation of it. The second is, *A pity and tenderness of spirit towards sinners.* He who knoweth the bitterness of his own wound, although he be in part healed himself, yet cannot but yearn over those who remain still exposed to the bitterness of the same wound. How did Christ pity sinners, even the most stubborn sinners! 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,' &c. The more men lie open to judgment, doth not afford us the more liberty of judging them; but the more it should excite our pity. It no way becomes a condemned person newly pardoned, to judg his fellow-offenders: but to pity them, and to lie abased under the sense of his own desert, which, by the meer mercy of the judg, he hath lately escaped the danger of."

REVIEW,

&c.

PART II.

Review of the writings of Isaac Penington after he joined the Society of Friends, or which have been published in the Collection of his Works since his decease.

In giving an account of the writings of Isaac Penington after he had joined the Society of Friends, I cannot engage to enter *much* into their contents. Such a plan would swell the catalogue itself into a volume of no inconsiderable size: and is the less needful as the titles of them are generally diffuse. The first is

1. The way of life and death made manifest, and set before men; whereby the many paths of death are impleaded, and the one path of life propounded and pleaded for; in some positions concerning the apostasy from the Christian spirit and life: with some principles guiding out of it: as also an answer to some objections whereby the simplicity in some may be entangled: held forth in tender good-will both to Papists and Protestants who have generally erred from the faith for these many generations, since the days of the apostles; and with that which they have

erred from are they comprehended. 4to. 1658. 14 sheets.

The first edition has in it a piece by Edward Burrough, and one by George Fox. These are omitted in the edition of Penington's works.

The positions are as follow:

"1. That there hath been a great apostasy from the Spirit of Christ, and from the true light and life of Christianity; which apostasy began in the apostles' days, and ripened apace afterwards."

"2. That in this great apostasy, the true state of Christianity hath been lost."

"3. That there is to be a recovery, a true recovery out of this state of apostasy, into the true state of Christianity again."

"4. That they that are in those things which have been set up in the times of the apostasy, are not yet come to the recovery from the apostasy."

"5. That the only way of recovery out of the apostasy is by returning to, and keeping in, that Spirit from which the apostasy was."

The principles mentioned in the title are these,

"1. That there is no salvation but by the true knowledge of Christ."

"2. That Christ saves by the new covenant."

"3. That the new covenant is written in the heart."

"4. That the Spirit of God alone can write the covenant in the heart."*

"5. Therefore the first proper step in religion, is to know how to meet with God's Spirit."

"6. The first way of meeting with the Spirit of God, is as a convincer of sin."

"7. That whereby the Spirit of God convinceth of of sin, is his light, shining in the conscience."

"8. That this light convincing of sin shineth in every conscience."

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* "Or, that Christ writes the covenant by his Spirit."

"9. The true way to life eternal is by believing in the light of the Spirit, which shineth in the conscience."

"10. That believing in the light of the Spirit which shines in the conscience, unites the soul to God, and opens the springs of life to it."

These principles, as well as the five positions, are discussed at large. Objections to this doctrine are answered, and there is a particular discussion of the important topic, Justification.

2. The scattered sheep sought after. First, in a lamentation over the general loss of the powerful presence of God in his people, since the days of the Apostles; with a particular bewailing of the withering and death of those precious buddings-forth of life, which appeared in many at the beginning of the late troubles in these nations; with the proper way of recovery for such. Secondly, in some propositions concerning the only way of salvation; where is an answer given to that great objection, *That the light which convinceth of sin, is the light of a natural conscience;* and a brief account rendered of the ground of men's understanding scriptures. Thirdly in exposing to view the fundamental principle of the gospel, upon which the redeemed spirit is built. Fourthly, and in some questions and answers (by way of catechism for the sake of the simple-hearted) directing to that principle, and fixing in it. 4to. 1659, 4 sheets. 2nd edit. 1665.

The propositions concerning the only way to salvation are the following four:

"1. That there is no way of being saved from sin, and wrath eternal, but by that Christ alone which died at Jerusalem."

"2. That there is no way of being saved by Him, but through receiving Him into the heart by a living faith, and having Him formed in the heart."

"3. That there is no way of receiving Christ into the

heart, and of having Him formed there, but by receiving the light of his Spirit, in which light He is, and dwells."

"4. That the way of receiving the light of the Spirit into the heart (and thereby uniting the Father and the Son), is by hearkening to and receiving its convictions of sin there."

The fundamental principle of the Gospel is held forth in that passage in the 1st Epist. of John, "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, That God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." It is not easy to abridge the catechism. The following winds up the whole. "Let thy religion be to feel the pure principle of life in the pure vessel of life; for the eye must be pure that sees the life, and the heart that receives it. And faith is a pure mystery, and it is only held in a pure conscience. Know that in thee that purifies thee; and then thou knowest Christ, and the Father, and the Spirit; and as that lives, and grows up in thee, so shalt thou know their dwelling-place, and partake of their life and fulness."

3. Babylon the Great described, the city of confusion, in every part whereof anti-christ reigns; which knoweth not the order and unity of the Spirit, but striveth to set up an order and uniformity according to the wisdom of the flesh, in all her territories and dominions: her sins, her judgments: with some plain queries further to discover her; and some considerations to help out of her suburbs, that her inward building may lie the more open to the breath and Spirit of the Lord, from which it is to receive its consumption and overthrow. 4to. 1659. 8 sheets.

The preface to this work is another account of the author's religious conflicts and experiences. The work itself appears to be a close reproof of all the semblances of religion which have been formed and worshipped in the world: and great use is made of the figure of a

city, and of the mystery of the beast, whore, &c. mentioned in the Apocalypse, which are, in many particulars, explained, according to the sense given to the author.

4. The Jew outward; being a glass for the professors of this age, wherein, if they read with meekness, and in the true light, such of them as have not overslipped the day of their visitation, may see their own spirits, to their own everlasting advantage and comfort, by learning subjection to that which hath power in it to destroy the evil spirit in them; containing some exceptions and arguments of the Jews against Christ's appearance in that body of flesh in their days; which the present professors may view and compare with their exceptions and arguments against his appearance in spirit in this age; that they may see and consider which of them are the more weighty. 4to. 1659. 4 sheets.

The drift of this piece is to show that, in like manner as the Jews rejected Christ, because their knowledge and expectations were outward, and gathered from their fleshly comprehension of the prophecies concerning Him; so the wise professors of the seventeenth century rejected and persecuted his life, as it appeared in their day; and that the natural effect, in every age, of walking according to the flesh, is to persecute that which is born of the Spirit. The analogy of the two cases is exhibited in a striking point of view; the reasoning upon it close and pertinent; and the Scripture references remarkably apposite.

5. The axe laid to the root of the old corrupt tree; and the spirit of deceit struck at in its nature; from whence all the error from the life, among both papists and protestants, hath arisen, and by which it is nourished and fed at this day; in a distinction between the faith which is of man, and the faith which

is of God; and in some assertions concerning true faith, its nature, rise, &c., its receiving of Christ, and its abiding and growing in his living virtue; with a warning concerning adding to, and diminishing from, the Scripture in general, and the prophecies of the Revelations in particular: discovering what it is, and the great danger of it, with the only way of preservation from it. Whereto is added, a short touch about the use of means; as also, a brief history concerning the state of the church since the days of the Apostles; with an exhortation to the present age. By the movings of the life, in a friend of the living Truth of the most high God: but an utter enemy to the spirit of error and blasphemy, wherever it is found, as well in the strictest of the Protestants, as among the grossest of the Papists. 4to. 1659. Six and a half sheets.

This makes the fourth in one year. It is a very close, searching work. Much of it is employed in detecting the marks of the false church, in the various forms under which it has appeared; and the deceivableness of unrighteousness is set forth by copious allusions to the book of the Revelation. The author seems aware that his doctrine will find difficult entrance into the minds of such as are satisfied with any thing short of the pure life; and may even induce some of those who are seeking it, to doubt whether they are not deceived: for he supposes the following objection, "*How difficult do you make the way to life, if not utterly impossible! If all this be true, who can be saved?*"

Answ. "The way to life *is* very difficult; yea, and impossible to that part in man, which is so busy in willing and running towards life; but it is as easy on the other hand, to that which the Father begetteth, raiseth up, and leadeth. 'The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err.' The wisest and richest merchants in Babylon cannot set one step in it. The least child in Sion cannot err there. Therefore, know that in thyself to

which it is so hard: and know that which God hath given to thee, which will make it easy. Thou hast a living talent given thee by God: let not thine eye be drawn from that; but join to that, keep there, and thou art safe: and that will open thine eye to see all deceits, just in the very season and hour of temptation. For thou must expect to meet with all these temptations, as thy growth makes thee capable of receiving them. And as they come, the true eye being kept open, they will be seen; and being seen, they will easily be avoided in the power of life; for in vain the net is spread in sight of the bird. Therefore that thou mayest be safe,

"1. Know the light, the eternal light of life, the little glimmerings and shinings of it in thy soul. This comes from the rock, to lead thee to the rock; and if thou wilt follow it, it will fix thee upon the rock, where thou canst not be shaken."

"2. Keep in the light, keep within the hedge, step not out of thine own; keep out of the circumference of the spirit of deceit; the power of whose witchery and sorcery extends all over the regions of darkness."

"3. Love simplicity, love the nakedness of life, stand single in the honesty of the heart; out of the intricate, subtil reasonings, and wise consultings about things; for by these means the serpent comes to twine about and deceive thy soul; but in the simplicity of the movings of life, in the light, lies the power, the strength, the safety."

"4. Lie very low continually, even at the foot of the lowest breathing and appearances of the light. Take heed of being above that wherein the life lies: for the wisdom, the power, the strength, yea, the great glory lies in the humility; and thou must never be exalted, thou must never come out of the humility, but find and enjoy the honour and glory of the life, in the humility."

"5. Mind the reproofs of the light; for that will still be setting thee to rights. That will still be bringing down that which would get up above: and there lies

the preservation. Oh the chastenings of the light, the sweet chastenings of the love by the light! These are healing stripes! This brings down the exalter, and that in thee which loves to be exalted, and to be seeking the honour of the spiritual riches, before the humility is perfected."

"Thus, in love of souls, have I poured out my soul before the Lord, and held forth gentle leadings, even to the most stubborn and stiff-necked."

In John Whiting's Catalogue, comes in next,

6. To the Parliament, the Army, and all the well-affected in the nation, *who have been faithful to the good old Cause.* 1659. Half a sheet.

In Whiting the title ends at "nation," and the piece itself is omitted in the Quarto edition. The author reproves the army for having forsaken their first principles, and having served the ends of interest and power to themselves; and exhorts the parliament not to second such a disposition, but to act for the purposes of righteousness.

7. A Brief Account of some Reasons (amongst many that might be given) why those people called Quakers, cannot do some things on the one hand, and forbear doing of some things on the other hand; for which they have suffered and do still suffer, so much violence from the people, and such sore persecution from the teachers and magistrates of these nations; whereby it may appear to all, who are willing to take any fair consideration of their cause, that their sufferings are for righteousness' sake, because of the integrity of their hearts towards God, and void of any just ground of offence towards man.—No date; published in a broad sheet; as was also,

8. Some Considerations proposed to the City of London,

and the nation of England, to calm their spirits, and prepare them to wait for what the Lord is bringing about, that they may not run headily into their ruin and destruction; and by this extraordinary heat of their spirits, kindle that fire which will soon devour them. With a short exhortation to them relating to their true settlement, and the removal of that which hinders it.

The two following were also published about this time.

9. Some Considerations proposed to the distracted Nation of England, concerning the present design and work of God therein; upon their submitting whereto doth their settlement alone depend, and not upon any form of government, or change of governors: as that spirit which seeketh their ruin tempteth them to believe. 1659.

10. To the Army. Very short.

11. A Question propounded to the Rulers, Teachers, and People of the Nation of England, for them singly to answer in their hearts and consciences, in the fear and dread of the mighty God of heaven and earth, &c. I abridge this long title, and insert a part of the question.

"When this nation was rent from popery (in part I mean; for wholly it was never rent, but did still remain in the same spirit; though by the magistrate's sword it was forced from that form and way of worship which the pope had established), did it wait on the Lord for the guidance of his Spirit and power, thereby to build up a true church and habitation for God in the Spirit? Or did it take such materials as were ready at hand, and frame up a building as well as it could, wherewith the consciences of many, that were tender-

hearted towards God, were even then dissatisfied?" 4to. One sheet.

12. The Root of Popery struck at; and the true ancient apostolic foundation discovered; in some propositions to the papists, concerning fallibility and infallibility; which cut down the uncertain, and manifest the certain way of receiving and growing up into the Truth. Also some considerations concerning the true and false Church and ministry, with the state of each since the days of the apostles; held forth in true love and pity to the souls of the papists, that they may hear and consider, and not mistake and stumble at the Rock of Ages, whereupon the prophets, apostles, and whole flock of God, throughout all generations have been built. There is likewise somewhat added concerning the ground of error, and the way to truth and unity, for the sake of such as are more spiritual, and have been more inwardly exercised in searching after truth. 1660. 4to. Three sheets.

The propositions are these:

"1. That councils may err."

"2. That the pope himself may err."

"3. That every man may err, in his interpretation of scripture."

"4. That if there be any light to be found any where shining from God, that light cannot err."

"5. That there must necessarily be such a light, communicated to all men since the fall."

"6. That this being let in, believed in, and obeyed, shineth more and more unto the perfect day; even until it hath wholly brought out of the error, into the truth."

"7. That nothing less can lead unto eternal life than an eternal light in man's spirit."

In this piece also is frequent reference to the de-

scription of the woman and the dragon, in the book of Revelations.

13. An Examination of the grounds or causes which are said to induce the court of Boston, in New-England, to make that order or law of banishment, upon pain of death, against the Quakers; as also of the grounds and considerations by them produced, to manifest the warrantableness and justice both of their making and executing the same; which they now stand deeply engaged to defend, having already thereupon put two of them to death. As also, of some further grounds for justifying of the same, in an appendix to John Norton's book (which was printed after the book itself, yet as part thereof); whereto he is said to be appointed by the general court. And likewise of the arguments briefly hinted, in that which is called 'A true relation of the proceedings against the Quakers,' &c. Whereunto somewhat is added about the authority and government, Christ excluded out of his church; which occasioneth somewhat concerning the true church-government. 4to. 1660. Thirteen sheets.

I take this to be a choice piece, and far from being useless now, or at any time, because the immediate cause of its publication is done away. The reader will find in it some able defence and elucidation of the principles of Friends; clear refutation of the arguments for persecuting them, and much of the spirit of love and good-will to the persecutors. The matter is well summed up, and the excluded, and the allowed authority of the church are well described.

14. A Warning of Love from the bowels of life, to the several generations of professors of this age, that they may awaken and turn towards the life, to be truly cleansed and saved by its powerful living virtue, before the storm of wrath break forth, and the

overflowing scourge overtake them, which will sweep away the strongest and most well-built refuge of lies: and sink those souls even into the pit of misery, which are there found when the storm comes: held forth in four propositions, assertions, or considerations, concerning man in his lost state, and his recovery out of it. 4to. 1660. One sheet.

This close piece may be epitomized by taking the four assertions, viz.

"1. That man is fallen from God."

"2. That man, by all the imaginations that can enter into his heart, and by all the means he can use, or courses he can run, cannot return back to God again, or so much as desire it."

"3. That all professions of God and of Christ upon the earth, all knowledge and beliefs whatsoever, with all practices and duties and ordinances of worship, save only such as proceed from, and are held in, the pure life, are but as so many fig-leaves, or deceitful plasters, which may skin over the wound, but cannot truly heal it."

"4. That the living seed of eternal life, which God hath hid in man underneath his earth, hath in it the living virtue, which alone can heal man, and restore him to God."

The subject of this assertion, he also holds forth, in another part, which for its brevity and beauty, and soundness, I also transcribe.—"That which recovers man, is the eternal virtue, the endless power, the life immortal, the Christ of God."

15. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 4to. 1660. One sheet.

This text is the title of a piece, printed in his works like a postscript to the former; but it is evidently a distinct one, and is so noted in Whiting's Catalogue.

16. An Epistle to all such as observe the Seventh-Day of the week for a sabbath.—1660.

This is also a separate piece, but in the works is only to be found in the following.

17. The new Covenant of the Gospel distinguished from the old Covenant of the Law, and the Rest or Sabbath of Believers from the Rest or Sabbath of the Jews; which differ as much from each other, as the sign and shadow doth from the things signified and shadowed out. In answer to some queries of W. Salter's tending to enforce upon Christians the observation of the Jewish Sabbath, which was given under the law to the Jews for a sign: as also tc some other queries sent in writing, upon occasion of an epistle directed to all such as observe the seventh day of the week for a sabbath, now under the gospel. As likewise some letters to the same purpose; with a brief explication of the mystery of the six days labour and seventh day's sabbath. Whereto are added, some considerations propounded to the Jews, tending towards their conversion to that which is the life and spirit of the law. 4to. 1660. Seven sheets: but the Considerations to the Jews occupy one, of which the pages begin afresh.

The first of the set of queries to which this book is an answer, is, "Whether the fourth commandment, expressed Exod. xx. be not moral and perpetual, as well as the other nine be, yea or no?" Our author maintains the negative, and shows the spiritual nature of the Christian rest.

Next follows, in Whiting's Catalogue, but not in the works,

18. Some few Queries and Considerations proposed to the Cavaliers, being of weighty importance to them. 4to. No date. One sheet.

It seems to have been written soon after the Restoration, and is a calm and close expostulation with the prevailing party.—"O," says he, "that they could fear the Lord for his goodness; and that those that are fallen under them might fear Him for his severity; and that we might all give over upbraiding, and fighting against one another, and every man fight against the lusts of his own heart; against pride, passion, envy, covetousness, hard-heartedness, oppression of men's consciences, doing to others what we would not receive from others, &c., for the hand of God is swift against the unrighteous spirit, and He overturns apace. And if this present settlement do not please Him; but if this generation, after all their afflictions, prove themselves unworthy of his mercy, not letting fall what the hand of the Lord hath gone forth against, but thinking to settle again upon firmer foundations what God hath all this while been shaking; the Lord will laugh at their counsels and at their strength, and overturn them in a moment."

The reader may compare this with the counsels, and with the overthrow, of the house of Stewart.

19. Some Queries concerning the work of God in the world, which is to be expected in the latter ages thereof; with a few plain words to the nation of England, tending towards stopping the future breakings-forth of God's wrath, both upon the people and powers thereof; with an Advertisement relating to the present state of things. 4to. 1660. One sheet.

This is in some respects similar to the foregoing. Near the conclusion, the author says, "It behoves this nation to consider what of Babylon may be found in it, and to part with it, that it may escape the plagues of Babylon, Rev. xviii. 4., which are very bitter, as ver. 7, 8, &c. These are the two main things whereof Babylon is guilty:

"1. An invented form of worship, a likeness of the true worship, but not the true worship itself.

"2. A persecuting, and endeavouring to suppress the power of the truth, even of the purity of the godly religion and worship, by means of this form; because for conscience' sake, men who are taught otherwise by the Spirit of God, cannot submit and subject thereto."

20. The Consideration of a position concerning the book of Common Prayer; as also of some particulars held forth for truths by one Edmund Ellis, stiled a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ: with a warning of tender bowels to the rulers, teachers, and people of this nation, concerning their church and ministry. Likewise, a few words concerning the kingdom, laws, and government of Christ in the heart and conscience; its inoffensiveness to all just laws and governments of the kingdom of men. 4to. 1660. Four sheets.

This is somewhat of a controversial piece, but our author does not seem to have had to do with a railing adversary; nor does he treat him with asperity. It cannot well be abridged; but I shall cite two passages, one to show the author's sense of the main question; the other, his state of mind, and his estimation of his own talents.

"Now, as touching the book of Common Prayer, or prayers conceived without the immediate breathings of the Spirit, I shall speak mine own experience faithfully, which is this; I have felt both these ways draw out the wrong part, and keep that alive in me which the true prayer kills. And he that utters a word beyond the sense that God begets in his spirit, takes God's name in vain, and provokes him to jealousy against his—soul. '*God is in heaven, thou art on earth, therefore let thy words be few.*' The few words which the Spirit speaks, or the few, still, soft, gentle breathings, which the Spirit begets, are pleasing to God, and profitable to the soul; but the many words which man's wisdom affects,

hurt the precious life, and thicken the veil of death over the soul; keeping that part alive which separates from God; which part must die, ere the soul can live." Vol. i. 408.

"As for me, I am but a shell; and if this party knew me (who sets me up so high, preferring me above many whom the Lord has preferred far above me), he would soon acknowledge me to be a poor, weak, contemptible one. Yet this I must by no means deny, that the pure liquor of the eternal life, at its pleasure, springeth up and issueth out through me; though I can also, in true understanding, say, that it issueth out far oftener, and much more abundantly, through others." p. 417.

21. An Answer to that common Objection against the Quakers, That they condemn all but themselves; with a loving and faithful advertisement to the nations and powers thereof. 4to. 1660. One sheet.

After owning the spirit which actuated the martyrs and spiritually-minded men of former days, and deprecating the disposition to stop short in partial reformation, our author thus sums up his answer:

"We are not against the true life and power of godliness, wherever it hath appeared, or yet appears, under the veil of any form whatsoever. Nay, all persons who singly wait upon the Lord, in the simplicity and sincerity of their hearts, whether under any form, or out of forms (that matters little to us), are very dear unto us in the Lord. But we are against all forms, images, imitations, and appearances, which betray the simplicity and sincerity of the heart, keep the life in bondage, and endanger the loss of the soul. And too many such now there are, which hold the immortal seed of life in captivity under death; over which we cannot but mourn, and wait for its breaking off the chains, and its rising out of all its graves, into its own pure life, power, and fulness of liberty in the Lord."

22. The great Question concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of Swearing under the Gospel, stated and considered of; for the satisfaction of such as desire to scan the thing in the weight of God's Spirit; and to see the true and clear determination of it in this unerring light. 4to. 1661. Two sheets.

This pamphlet condemns swearing, on the ground of the superior purity of the Christian dispensation, to that wherein oaths were allowed; as well as on the prohibition of Christ. An objection, probably that which has been made from Heb. vi. 17. is answered.

23. Somewhat spoken to a weighty Question concerning the Magistrate's protection of the innocent: wherein is held forth the blessing and peace which nations ought to wait for and embrace in the latter days; with some considerations for the serious and wise in heart throughout this nation to ponder, for diverting God's wrath (if possible) from breaking forth upon it. Also, a brief account of what the people called Quakers desire in reference to the civil government. With a few words to such as by the everlasting arm of God's power have been drawn and gathered out of the apostasy, into the living truth and worship. 4to. 1661. Two sheets.

This was published from Aylesbury gaol. An account of it is already given, at page 56.

24. Concerning Persecution; which is the afflicting or punishing that which is good, under the pretence of its being evil; which practice is contrary to the very nature of mankind (so far as it is drawn out of the corruption and depravation [depravity],) which would be good and do good, and have good cherished and evil suppressed, both in itself and others. It is contrary also to all equal and righteous government, which is for the suppressing of evil and cherishing of

good; and not for the afflicting and crushing of that which is good, upon pretence of its being evil. Yet this unhappy error will always be committed in nations and governments, until the proper right, and just liberty of men's consciences be discerned, acknowledged, and allowed. Likewise, there are some answers given to that common objection against affording conscience its due liberty, because evil persons may pretend conscience to escape the just punishment of their evil deeds. With a brief account of that supposed stubbornness, which by many is objected against the people called Quakers. Given forth in love to this nation, that at length, the true bottom and foundation of a lasting peace and settlement may be espied; the spirits of the governors and people fixed thereon; and that dangerous rock of persecution (whereon both the powers and people of this nation have so often split) carefully avoided by all. 4to. 1661. Four sheets.

The title itself is a table of contents, which precludes the necessity of epitomizing the book. Like many of Isaac Penington's writings, it is systematic and perspicuous, not confused and obscure; and its several positions are treated of with a distinctness, which allows the reader to pause as he proceeds, without danger of losing his clue. I must just cite the concluding paragraph. "O! how happy will the day be, when the Lord shall have wrought down the selfish spirit in man, and shall have raised up his own noble and equal principle. Then shall righteousness spring up, and spread abroad throughout the nations; and 'the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.'"

25. Some directions to the panting Soul, which hath been long travelling in the letter, but hath not yet been acquainted with the power, nor hardly so much as entered into the ministration of endless life (which is the ministration of the Gospel), that it may feel the

spring, and come to drink there of the living waters. 4to. 1661. One sheet.

Whiting places this piece after the two following; but from its date it seems more rightly placed in the Works. It is difficult to give an outline of so short a work: its tenor may be inferred from the motto from Matt. xi. 28—30. "Come unto me all ye that labour," &c.

26. Concerning the Worship of the living God, which He teacheth Israel his people, who know Him to be the only true God, and the worship which He teacheth them to be the only true spiritual worship. With some questions and answers relating to conversion and tenderness of conscience. 4to. One sheet.

It is easy to see that spiritual worship, free from any mixture of man's will or wisdom, is what the author enforces; he notices the springing up of such a worship in his day; and he foretells a day, in which "it will be as honourable to wait for the movings of the Spirit, and to worship alone therein, as now it is reproachful."

27. To all such as complain that they want power; not applying themselves to yield subjection to what of God is made manifest in them, upon a pretence of waiting for power so to do. 4to. 1661. Two sheets.

I shall rather aim at giving a specimen, than an analysis of this excellent piece. "I confess," says our author, "the power doth not so flow forth to man, as man expects it; but—begins in him as weakness. There is all—the power of the enemy against the work of God in the heart. There is but a little thing (like a grain of mustard-seed), a weak thing, a foolish thing, even that which is not (to man's eye) to overcome all this; and yet in this is the power."

In this piece there is a sweet letter (to Isaac Penington, most probably, at the time of his early convincement) from John Crook, well worth the perusal of such

as are truly awakened, but "afflicted and not comforted."

28. Some Questions and Answers for the opening of the eyes of the Jews Natural, that they may see the Hope of Israel, which hath so long been hid from them: with some questions and answers, for the direction, comfort, help, and furtherance of God's spiritual Israel, in their travels in spirit, from spiritual Egypt, through the spiritual wilderness, to spiritual Canaan, which is the land where the redeemed soul flourisheth in the life, walking with God, and worshipping Him in spirit and truth. 8vo. 1661. Eight sheets.

This, also, though a work of deep concernment, and very far from relating wholly to the Jews, as indeed the title implies, is not capable of being represented by a summary. I have however thought the following advice so suitable a caution to the readers of mysterious writings (such as spiritual tracts must ever be to the natural understanding; and the experiences of the adept, to the novice even in spiritual things themselves), and indeed even to the merely curious readers of the scriptures—I have, I say, esteemed it so apposite as to be worth transcribing. "He that readeth these things," saith our author, after a long description of the soul's spiritual travel, snares, and means of deliverance, "let him not strive to comprehend them; but be content with what he feeleth thereof suitable to his own present estate: and as the life grows in him, and he in the life, and he comes to meet with the things and exercises spoken of, the words and experiences concerning them will of themselves open to him; and be useful and serviceable to him so far as the Lord pleaseth; he keeping to the leadings, savour, and principle of life in himself, wherein alone his knowledge, sight, growth and experiences are safe."

29. Some Questions and Answers, showing man his

duty, and pointing him to the principle of God in his heart; which is the root of life in all dispensations; and which, being kept to, is able to bear the fruit of life in every dispensation. As also some questions and answers concerning the seed of Jacob, and the true church. 8vo. 1662. Three sheets.

This is also another piece little capable of abridgement; because, like some of the foregoing, and many other of our author's writings, it is written in the way of dialogue, one question arising out of the preceding answer.

The piece before-mentioned, No. 27, "To all such as complain they want power," &c. is printed with it in the Works.

30. Some observations on that portion of Scripture, Rom. xiv. 20. for the service of such in this present age, whose eyes and hearts the Lord shall please to open, to see and consider the weight of the truth thereof. With some few weighty words of advice to several sorts of people, according to their different states. 8vo. 1662. One sheet.

"The passage of scripture is this, "For meat, destroy not the work of God." The observations are four: namely,

"1. God hath a work in some men's hearts."

"2. That this work of God in man is liable to be destroyed."

"3. A little thing will destroy the work of God in the heart."

"4. No man should do that which tendeth to destroy the work of God in himself, or the work of God in another."

Each observation is briefly enlarged upon. The first may seem to savour of unconditional and partial election. Nevertheless our author appears to have been an advocate for universal grace: but in a piece inferring and asserting the possibility of destroying the divine operation, it was sufficient to assert it only as existing in

some. In this view, it is a reply to the assertors of the impossibility of falling from the least degree of saving grace. There are short addresses to several states; viz. to such as never have been tender in conscience; to such as having been so, are become hard; to such as are still tender; and, lastly, to the obdurate and persecuting. Few works more teem with benevolence than this does. From it is given the extract at page 66.

31. Three Queries propounded to the King and Parliament, in the fear of the Most High, and in the tenter love of my soul to them. 4to. One sheet. No date.

The three questions are these,

"1. Whether ye do certainly and infallibly know what was the ground or cause why the hand of the Lord was so heavy upon this nation, and why He overturned the government thereof, and brought the honourable into contempt?"

"2. Whether, when the Lord did overturn the former powers, with the glory and beauty of this nation, and raise up other powers out of the dust (as I may say), even from among them of low degree, if they had then answered what the Lord expected and required of them in their day, whether they should have been continued by Him in their dominion or no; and whether ye should have had this day of trial, which it hath pleased the Lord now to afford you?"

"3. If ye do not certainly know what was the cause of the Lord's former displeasure against you, and of his so sore afflicting you, but shall err in judgment, and set up the same things again, which the Lord then put forth his hand to throw down; and also endeavour to crush and suppress that, which the Lord then made way for the growth of; whether this will not endanger your overthrow from the hand of the Lord?"

This is a dissuasive against persecution. A large extract from it is given at page 63.

32. A Salutation of Love and tender Good-will to the Commissioners of the Peace for the county of Bucks, and such others in that county, and also throughout the nation, as are concerned in the contents hereof. Published in one broad sheet. No date.

This is a serious warning to avoid the eternal displeasure of the Almighty, by avoiding the temptations to sin. It may be considered as a short sermon, appears to be dictated in love, and is a piece of general application.

33. A weighty Question propounded to the King, and both Houses of Parliament; together with some queries about religion, for the good of men's souls, that they may seek after, and be established in, that which gives life. 4to. 1663. One sheet.--The first part being short, I transcribe the whole.

"Question. *Whether laws made by man, in equity ought to extend any further than there is power in man to obey?*"

"Is it not cruel to require obedience in such cases, wherein the party hath not a capacity in him of obeying?"

"Now, in things concerning the worship of God, wherein a man is limited by God, both what worship he shall perform, and what worship he shall abstain from: here he is not left at liberty to obey what laws shall be made by man contrary hereunto."

"The New Testament worship is to be in spirit and truth; which is a principle above man's reason, and cannot rightly be limited by a lower principle; but the lower principle in every man should be subjected to the higher, both in himself and others."

"These things I write, not in pride or conceitedness:

but with an humble heart and in love; that God may have his due; Cæsar, his; and all men, theirs; and that wrath from God may not break forth upon this nation; for surely it cannot but greatly provoke Him, to see his people so deeply suffer for their obedience to Him in what He requireth of them."

"I am a lover of peace, truth, and righteousness: and a hearty desirer of the welfare and prosperity of this nation: and that it may no more be broken up in the wrath and indignation of the Lord; but that the peaceable and righteous seed, which he hath sown in the hearts of many, may be quietly suffered to grow up, to the praise of the Lord, and to the good of mankind."

"This is from one who was a mourner over you in your affliction: and is now also a mourner over those whom ye afflict.—I. P."

This piece also contains a weighty discussion of the difference between the persuasions of reason, and the persuasions of faith; giving of course the superiority to the latter.

34. Some of the Mysteries of God's Kingdom glanced at, for the service of the upright-hearted among several sorts of professors; who have formerly had a feeling of most of these things in measure: to which feeling, and that which gave it them, they are hereby allured and invited to return; that the *many names* and *various ways* may perish and vanish; and the *one Spirit*, *one Life*, *one new living Name* and *Way*, may be waited for and pursued after; that so all the tribes and families, and several divisions of Israel may know one another; and heartily unite in one nature and inward power of life, which doth good to all, and harm to none, neither inwardly nor outwardly. By a traveller towards the living substance, and a mourner over the wanderings of the scattered sheep. 4to. 1663. Four sheets.

This work is divided into sixteen sections, with the following titles. Concerning Christ—The Way of knowing Christ—Repentance—Faith—Hope—Love—Obedience—Peace, or rest—Joy—Liberty—Prayer—Regeneration—Justification—Sanctification—Reconciliation—Redemption.

As a specimen, I select the following extract, being the section on love.

"What is Love? What shall I say of it, or how shall I in words express its nature! It is the sweetness of life. It is the sweet, tender, melting nature of God, flowing up through his seed of life into the creature; and, of all things, making the creature most like unto himself, both in nature and operation. It fulfils the law. It fulfils the gospel. It wraps up all in one, and brings forth all in the oneness. It excludes all evil out of the heart; it perfects all good in the heart. A touch of love doth this in measure; perfect love doth this in fulness. But how can I proceed to speak of it! Oh! that the souls of all that fear and wait on the Lord might feel its nature fully; and then would they not fail of its sweet overcoming operations, both towards one another, and towards enemies. The great healing, the great conquest, the great salvation is reserved for the full manifestation of the love of God. His judgments, his cuttings, his hewings, by the word of his mouth, are but to prepare for, but not to do, the great work of raising up the sweet building of his life; which is to be done in love, and in peace, and by the power thereof. And this my soul waits and cries after, even the full springing up of eternal love in my heart, and in the swallowing of me wholly into it, and the bringing of my soul wholly forth in it, that the life of God, in its own perfect sweetness, may freely run forth through this vessel; and not be at all tinctured by the vessel, but perfectly tincture and change the vessel into its own nature; and then shall no fault be found in my soul before the Lord; but the spotless life be fully en-

joyed by me, and become a perfectly pleasant sacrifice to my God."

"O how sweet is Love! how pleasant is its nature! how takingly doth it behave itself, in every condition, upon every occasion, to every person, and about every thing! How tenderly, how readily, doth it help and serve the meanest; How patiently, how meekly doth it bear all things, either from God or man; how unexpectedly soever they come, or how hard soever they seem! How doth it believe! How doth it hope! How doth it excuse, how doth it cover even that which seemeth not to be excusable, and not fit to be covered! How kind is it even in its interpretations and charges concerning miscarriages! It never overchargeth, it never grates upon the spirit of him whom it reprehends. It never hardens it never provokes; but carrieth a meltingness and power of conviction with it. This is the nature of God. This, in the vessels capacitated to receive and bring it forth in its glory, the power of enmity is not able to stand against, but falls before, and is overcome by."

In this work, though not specified in the title, there are "Some Questions and Answers of deep concernment to the Jews, from one who hath been a wrestler and traveller [travailer] with the Lord of life, for the day of their mercy and redemption." I shall only quote the following lines, and observe that the concluding address to the Jews is very earnest and pathetic. The selected quotation is an answer to the first question, the piece being catechetical.—"That there is mercy towards, and redemption for, that poor scattered, forsaken people, my heart hath from my childhood, and doth still steadfastly believe."

35. Some deep considerations concerning the State of Israel, past, present, and to come. With some questions and answers concerning unity. 4to. No date. Two sheets.

This has relation to the state of spiritual religion in

our author's memory; but as the nature of the human mind is alike in all times, it is not to be considered as an obsolete piece. In looking it over, I fell upon a very tender and encouraging salutation to the afflicted traveller towards Sion.

The questions concerning spiritual unity are the following:

"What is it? 2. Wherein doth it consist? 3. How preserved? 3. How interrupted? 5. How recovered, if decaying?"

The reader may probably incline to turn to the answers (which it would exceed my plan to insert,) when he has tasted the following paragraph, with which this piece concludes:

"And let all strive to excel in tenderness and in long-suffering, and to be kept out of hard and evil thoughts one of another, and from harsh interpretations concerning any thing relating to one another. Oh! this is unworthy to be found in an Israelite towards an Egyptian: but exceeding shameful and inexcuseable to be found in one brother towards another. How many weaknesses doth the Lord pass by in us! How ready is He to interpret every thing well concerning his disciples, that may bear a good interpretation! *The spirit*, saith He, *is willing, but the flesh is weak.* When they had been all scattered from Him, upon his death, He did not afterwards upbraid them, but sweetly gathered them again. O dear friends, have we received the same life of sweetness? Let us bring forth the same sweet fruits, being ready to excuse, and to receive what may tend towards the excuse of another in any doubtful case; and where there is any evil manifest, wait, Oh! wait, to overcome it with good. Oh! let us not spend the strength of our spirits in crying out of one another because of evil; but watch and wait where the mercy and the healing virtue will please to arise. *O Lord, my God, when thou hast shown the wants of Israel in any kind sufficiently* (*whether in the particular or in the general*), *bring forth the supply thereof from thy fulness,*

so ordering it in thy eternal wisdom, that all may be ashamed and abased before Thee, and thy name praised in and over all."

As this piece is said to be by "Isaac Penington the younger" (at least is so printed in the works,) I mention it before the next, though that precedes in Whiting's Catalogue; but, with Whiting, I put both before what is here numbered 37, because this being written in Aylesbury prison, it seemed natural to connect it with a series of pieces also written there.

36. Concerning God's seeking out his Israel: likewise, concerning the principle of life whereby He seeketh them; and the way of their closing with his Spirit therein. As also concerning the two covenants; under one whereof He pleaseth to exercise and prepare them for the life and inheritance, which He hath treasured up for them in the other. With a postscript, relating some things necessary for lost man to be acquainted with, in his travels from his lost estate. 4to. 1663. Three sheets.

This wants in the title the appellation "younger," which seems to denote that about this time our author lost his father, the alderman, who, as has before been remarked, died in the Tower, a prisoner to the royal party then risen to power.

This piece is addressed to Friends in and about Godmanchester, in Huntingdonshire. A part of it arose on this wise: Some time before, the author had been at a meeting there, in which whilst another Friend was speaking, some words sprung up in his mind. When the Friend ceased, the words did not again spring in him, and he dared not to utter them from bare remembrance, but went away with a burden. After some time, one morning, not then thinking of the circumstance, the very same words sprung up again livingly, with a pointing to write them down, with what else should be given to him, and to send them to the Friends of the neighbourhood of Godmanchester.

I have found it more than ordinarily difficult to fix upon any part of this work as a specimen. The words which occurred at Godmanchester were these: "*The Shepherd of Israel is seeking out his sheep, even the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" The title of this book, as well as this sentence, may be thought by some to have a predestinarian aspect; but he defines "his sheep" to be the sons of men; and "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," those among the sons of men who have felt touches of the life, but have not fully followed it. A second part of the work has this title—"Concerning the Seed, or inward principle, whereby life is begotten and maintained in the heart." In this, the lowness and weakness of the first appearances of good, and the necessity of being content to receive it in its low appearance, are much insisted on. Then follow remarks "Concerning the two Covenants." Here again the author shows himself no advocate for a partial call by grace; saying, "This visitation of grace is to all mankind, there being none upon earth whom the Lord doth not thus seek, and visit with the light of his eternal life, thus administered through the grace." This section contains encouraging advice to the upright yet weary traveller; and also the author's belief that there may yet be a greater manifestation of the love and life than yet is. There is also a Postscript, concerning "Some things necessary for lost man to be acquainted with: as, 1. To know his lost estate and misery for ever, unless the Lord pity and help him. 2. To know the light wherewith the Lord visits the souls that sit in darkness. 3. To breathe to the Lord, and wait to have his heart joined to the power of life daily. 4. To put forth all the strength of his soul and mind, and all the members of his body, in the service of the Lord. 5. To wait daily to receive the strength from the Lord, wherewith he serveth the Lord. 6. To feel the grace and mercy of the Lord, in whatever he receiveth from the Lord, or whatever he doth for the Lord. 7. To wait for the wasting of the man, and the raising up of the seed day

by day."—I have abridged most of these, and shall much abridge the conclusion.

"Here," saith he, "is safety indeed! Here is everlasting righteousness so brought in, that it can never be removed out of the heart more. Here, everlasting life and the soul are one for ever.—This is the mark of Israel, and the haven of its eternal rest."

37. Some Queries concerning the order and government of the Church of Christ. 4to. No date. Two sheets. Written in Aylesbury prison.

The scope of this piece is to establish the necessity of order in the church; in reply to such as contend that general regulations may occasion a man to turn away from the measure of life in his own vessel, to another man's measure. This, and other objections are answered. "Did not," says Penington, "the apostles preach up the measure of life in their day,—the anointing within, its sufficiency to teach all things? &c. And yet they did so preach it as to overthrow the ministry, or the gifts or service, either towards them that were without, or them that were within? Had they not power over them in the Lord? Were they not to build them up in the holy faith; and also to watch against wolves and devouring spirits?" The tract however seems to have a principal reference to the judgment respecting the ministry of others. The latter part of it relates to unity, and the author mentions four means, which he had found helpful to preserve him in unity with the body. The first is, *the pure fear of the Lord;* the second, *humility of heart;* the third, *sobriety of judgment.** "Not to set up mine own judgment," says he, "or that which I account the judgment of life in me, above the judgment of others, or that which is indeed life in others. For the Lord hath appeared to others, as well as to me: yea, there are

* So the Apostle. Not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think *soberly*, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν.

others, who are, in—the purity and dominion of his life, far beyond me." The last mentioned means are, *tenderness, meekness, coolness, and stillness of spirit.* "These," he declares, "are of an uniting, preserving nature. He that differs—from the body, cannot be thus; and he that is thus, cannot rend or divide."

38. An Epistle, written from Aylesbury prison to Friends in England, Ireland, Scotland, Holland, New-England, Barbadoes, or any where else, where the Lord God shall order this to come, in the tender spirit of life and love, greeting. 4to. 1666. One sheet and a half.

There is much in this of the same stamp with the last: which makes it the more probable that Whiting's arrangement is the right one.

39. One more tender visitation to the men of this generation, sent to them in bowels of love and tender compassion, before their day be over. Published in a broad sheet. 1666. Dated from Aylesbury prison, 16th, 5th month.

This is a tender, pathetic remonstrance, chiefly with those in authority; breathing, according to my capacity to judge, the genuine spirit and language of a persecuted Christian to his oppressors.

40. Concerning the Church, or, of the Church-state under the Gospel: whereby it may appear what a miserable apostacy from the truth hath overspread and covered the earth for many ages and generations, and how gross and thick the darkness yet lies upon it; though the light of God in his tender mercy, hath broke forth and shined upon the people of his gathering, and through them hath also visited the world. The guidance of this in my heart was particularly and chiefly towards the papists; but I afterwards

had a true sense that it also extended to the state of such Protestants as had not waited on the Lord, for Him (in his wisdom and power) to rear up his own building; but had ventured to build of themselves, and so had reared up churches in the same spirit of error, darkness, and apostacy, which they seemed to depart from. Against all which the Lord will fight, and all which He will break down, in the day of the revelation of the glorious light and power of his truth, which will overcome, subdue, and reign over the earth; not after the manner of men, but in the heavenly dominion of his life.—Written in Aylesbury prison, about the middle of the sixth month, 1666.—Whereunto are annexed, some observations upon the eternal judgment, as it is expressed by Christ, Matt. xxv. 31, to the end of the chapter.—This last was written 29th of the 8th month. The whole two sheets and a half, 4to.

The title is full and particular. I attempt not to analyze; but select the description of the means of knowing a true church.

"There must be somewhat in man, to know them [modern accuracy would say *it*], and somewhat in them to be known by. That in man which knows them, must be somewhat of God in Him; for that which is of man, cannot measure or judge of the things of God. As the worldly wisdom and spirit could not know Christ formerly; so neither now can it know his church."

The well-known passage in Matt. xxv. is here brought as a weighty argument against persecution.

41. Concerning the sum or substance of our Religion, who are called Quakers? and the exercises and travails of our spirits therein. No date. 4to. Two sheets.

The author declares the sum of their religion to be

the feeling and discerning of the two seeds. This is opened in the first part. The next division is, "Concerning Christ, coming to the Father by Him, receiving Him, walking in Him; not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. And concerning reading the scriptures aright."

The third section relates to the gospel-ministration: and the fourth is, "Concerning Christ's being manifested without, and his being also manifested within, and how both are owned by them that know the truth." Lastly are, "A few words concerning the principle of truth; what it is; how it may be discerned; and how it may be purchased and possessed."

42. Some things of great weight and concernment to all; briefly opened and held forth from a true sense and understanding, for the healing of the ruins and breaches, which the enemy of mankind hath made on men's souls. As, 1. Some assertions concerning the principle and way of life. 2. Some further directions to Christ, the principle and fountain of life. 3. The end of Christ's manifestation, his salvation, and whom He saves. 4. Three questions answered concerning Justification. 5. Of the pure, constant, eternal, unchangeable nature of God's truth. Written in the time of my confinement in Aylesbury, when love was working in me, and the life of God in me travailing and wrestling with the Lord for the salvation of others. 4to. 1667. Two sheets and a half.

The two first sentences of this work will, in great measure, manifest the scope of it.

1. "That it is a great and hard matter to come into a capacity of knowing and receiving the truth. It is no hard matter to take up any religion that a man finds in the world. To read scriptures, to believe what a man finds related there, according to his understand-

ing of them; yea, to believe that he hath the light and help of the Spirit in his reading and understanding; to apply himself also to practice and observe what he finds therein required; and to aim at holiness, &c. This is no hard matter: every man that is serious, and seeks religion of any kind, but in the weight of a man's spirit, may go thus far. But all this administers not the true capacity: but he that meets with *it*, must go further than thus."

2. "That which gives the true capacity is a principle of life from God; and there alone, and no where else, can a man meet with it, and receive it. This principle is the seed of the kingdom, or heavenly leaven, with which the mind must be in some measure leavened, ere it can come into a true capacity of understanding and receiving the truth. And in this leaven must it abide and grow up, if it abide and grow in the true knowledge."

The foregoing tracts (with the exceptions already noticed) compose the first volume of the Quarto edition of Isaac Penington's works, printed by the late Samuel Clark of London, for John and Thomas Kendall, Colchester, and published 1761.

43. A Question to the Professors of Christianity, whether they have the true, living, powerful, saving knowledge of Christ, or no. With some queries concerning Christ and his appearances; his taking upon Him our flesh; as also concerning his flesh and blood, and our being formed thereof and feeding thereon. And an incitation to professors, seriously to consider whether they or we fail in the true acknowledgement and owning of the Christ which died at Jerusalem. Likewise, some propositions and considerations concerning the nature of church worships and ordinances since the death of the apostles, for the sake of the simplicity, which hath been long

held captive therein. With the sounding of Bowels towards thee, O England! Also a faithful guidance to the principle and path of truth. With some sensible, experimental questions and answers, from the tenth chapter of John. By I. Penington, prisoner in Aylesbury, who (by the counsel of the Lord) hath chosen rather to suffer afflictions with the despised of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. 4to. 1667. Seven sheets.

"The question," says he, "is not, whether they know what is said of Christ in the scriptures; but whether they know it *savingly*, *truly*, *livingly*, *powerfully*. Yea, they may know what is said of Him, and yet not know Him of whom those things are said."

He gives many instances of the Jews, who, having furnished themselves with many outward marks from the scriptures for the discovery of Christ, yet knew Him not when He came; and declares that many now can condemn the Jews, who are acting over again in spirit the same thing. The queries concerning Christ are thirty-eight in number, tending to lead to a confession that the sacrifice of Christ has more than an outward interpretation: and pointing out the sense of many scriptural expressions respecting the mode of salvation by Christ. In the part entitled "An Incitation," &c., he thus repels the charge, that our Friends did not acknowledge Christ, as testified of in the scriptures. "We do really in our hearts own that Christ who came in the fulness of time, in that prepared body, to do the Father's will (his coming into the world, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, &c.); in plainness and simplicity of heart, according as it is expressed in the letter of the scriptures. We own no other Christ than that, nor hold forth no other thing for Christ, but Him who then appeared, and was made manifest in flesh."

These four things he asserts;

"1. That nothing can save but the knowledge of that very Christ who offered up the prepared body at Jerusalem. 2. That no knowledge of Christ can save, but the living knowledge; which is only given to that which is begotten of the Spirit, and runs not out into the fleshly conceivings about the things mentioned in the scriptures. 3. That the man who knoweth not Christ in spirit, but calleth the shinings of his light, his checks for evil, his motions to good, *natural;* this man though he seem to own Christ ever so much according to the letter, yet in truth denies Him. 4. He that denies Christ (in his visitations in his own heart, and before men in the truths which he holds forth by his ministers of his Spirit) him will He deny before his Father in heaven." I abridge. See the whole, vol. 2. 4to. p. 27.

The Sounding of Bowels towards England is a weighty piece, turning on these two questions. "What is the way of peace?" "What is the way of trouble?"

Another part of this work is some exposition of the similitude of the Shepherd, the door, the fold, and the sheep, in John x. It thus ends: "The Lord God, who is the spring and fountain of all good, inflame people with desires after the pure life and holy nature, which is of and from Christ, the Seed, his Son, and satisfy those desires which are singly and uprightly after him." There also is a general conclusion to the whole. This also is a product of imprisonment.

44. To such as are not satisfied with a profession without the true life and power, but have sincere desires in their hearts after the Lord himself, and a willingness to be acquainted with his pure, living truth, and with the soul's true guide and leader. This experience is in my heart to express unto you, which we have all along witnessed in our travels out of the

dark, corrupt land, into the land of life and purity. 4to. 1668. One sheet and a half.

This piece does not appear to admit of a specimen.

Next to it, in the Works, is printed the Account of his soul's travel towards the Holy Land, &c. which forms part of the following tract.

45. Observations on some passages of Lodowick Muggleton, in his interpretation of the 11th chapter of the Revelations. As also on some passages of that book of his styled *The Neck of the Quakers broken*, and in his letter to Thomas Taylor; whereby it may appear what spirit he is of, and what god his commission is from. Whereunto is added, a brief Account of my soul's travel towards the holy land, with a few words concerning the way of knowing and receiving the truth. Written in tender love to souls, in true sense and understanding received from the Lord, and with reverence to his holy Spirit and power. 4to. 1668. Three sheets and a half.

It appears by this, that the early editors did not think fit to reprint the observations on Muggleton; as they took only the latter part of this pamphlet. The substance of the "Account," &c. is given at page 28, forming a part of the narrative of the author's convincement.

46. Some things relating to Religion, proposed to the Royal Society, so termed; to wit, concerning the right ground of certainty therein; concerning tenderness of spirit, and persecution; a query concerning separation; concerning washing away sin from the conscience, and the garment of salvation, and what it is that is covered therewith. Likewise some questions and answers concerning the church of the new covenant, the rock or foundation whereon it is built, and

its preservation by and upon the rock. With some queries concerning the scattered and hidden estate of the church; and concerning that church which got up in the view of the world instead thereof; and was acknowledged by the world, as if she had been the true church; though in deed and in truth she was not so. Whereunto are added, some queries to professors, who speak of high attainments, &c. Written by one, whom it hath pleased the Lord (of his great goodness and tender mercy) to lead out of the darkness into his marvellous light; known among men by the name of Isaac Penington. 4th. 1668. Three sheets.

It may seem strange that a society incorporated for the purpose of investigating natural knowledge, should be selected for a religious address. The author's prefatory letter may open his intention in it, as the copious title may sufficiently, for this cursory view, show the contents of the work.

"Friends, I have heard that ye are seeking after the excellency of nature and learning. I am not for discouraging any man, in endeavouring after that which is good, useful, and excellent in its kind and place; but it is the advantage of every thing to know and abide in its place; and to honour and serve Him from whom all good gifts and endowments come. Man hath but a moment in this world, and he is here no more; and then *the spirit returneth to God, that gave it*, to give an account of the talent which He gave it, and its improvement thereof, to the glory of Him that gave it, and to the salvation of its own soul. Now, this talent is of a higher kind than nature, and will lead higher than nature; giving a man to partake of that wisdom from which nature came, and teaching him to order all that is natural to its right end. For God is not an enemy to nature; but to the corruption and disorder of nature. I desire ye might know and partake of the true wisdom, and feel union with God in the principle of his own

life; and the incorruptible and heavenly seed of God receive dominion over the earthly and corruptible. For this end singly, in the love springing up in my heart towards you (as it often doth, both towards particular persons and societies; for I am a friend to all, and a lover of all; sincerely desiring the good of all, and the right guidance of their souls to happiness), have I proposed these things following more particularly to your view, though they concern others also, that ye thereby might be awakened to search after that which is most excellent in you, and be acquainted with the virtue and precious effects thereof, to the full satisfaction and complete joy of your souls, in that which alone is able fully to satisfy, and give them ground of durable joy and rejoicing; in that which is not of a perishing nature, but which was, and is, and will be, the same for ever."

> "From a friend to the everlasting peace of your souls, and a desirer of your welfare and prosperity in this world,—Isaac Penington."

47. Of the Church in its first and pure state, in its declining state, in its declined state, and in its recovery. With the way of salvation in the covenant of life opened, and some stumbling blocks removed out of the way of the simple hearted. Likewise, some queries concerning the new covenant: with an exhortation to all people; but more especially to such as are desolate and distressed. By one who testifieth what he hath seen, and heard, and tasted, and handled of the word and life eternal, Isaac Penington. Whereunto is added, a visit of tender and upright love to such as retain a sincerity towards the Lord. Also, a brief account of the ground of certainty and satisfaction, which it hath pleased the Lord to establish in my heart, concerning religion and the things of his kingdom. And a question answered, about the way of knowing the motions, doctrines, and

teachings of Christ's Spirit: with somewhat relating to the gospel-rest or sabbath; and some queries to such as complain of want of power to become the Lord's, and serve Him. 4to. 1668. Nine sheets and a half.

The Church in its pure state is portrayed by descriptions taken from 2 Pet. i. 1.; 1 Pet. i. 8., and ii. 5.; 1 John, ii. 8, 12—14, 18, 20, 21.; Heb. vi. 10.; x. 32, 33.; xii. 22—24, 28.; also from Rev. i. 5, 6. It is described as formed of "squared stones, fit for the spiritual building; not old, rough, fierce, cruel, implacable, unregenerate, unholy spirits; but meek, gentle, lowly, tender, poor in spirit, merciful, peaceable in themselves, and making peace among men, renewed and sanctified in spirit, holy in conversation, suffering for that power of truth and righteousness which they profess and bear witness to."

Treating of a declining church, he says, "Can any thing preserve a soul, or church, but God's power?—A church is like a garden, needs digging, dressing, watering, and sun-shine.—Do not weeds easily spring up in a garden? yea, ranker weeds than in common ground, ———if it be not—kept by the gardener. Read the figure and understand.———If but one root of bitterness spring up in a church, it may defile many, and trouble the whole—so one corrupted church may—poison many more."

An instance of a declined, fallen church, is given from 2 Thes. ii. 4; and the condition of its members is described from 2 Tim. iii. 2, &c.

As to the state of the church in the recovery, I briefly notice the change of language, which, with great force, and beauty, and significance, he ascribes to it:

"It shall be said no more, 'Who can make war with the beast?' after the Lamb hath overcome him; but 'Who is like to thee, O Lord, O King of saints,

who hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned?'"

In the "Way of Salvation opened," among other things, the Calvinistic doctrine of Reprobation is combated, and there are some nice disquisitions on this subject. The following distinctions I incline to quote: "It is not the creature which is rejected by its Maker; but somewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. Nor is it the creature (simply) which is elected; but somewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. And as any man comes into that, the election is begun in him———But as any man departs from that, he departs from the election into the reprobation."

In the "Visit of tender and upright love," may be found a brief discussion of the subjects of Water-baptism, and the Supper, together with divers other weighty subjects, on some of which Friends have been, and are, often misunderstood, and misrepresented. On the whole, as this is not one of our author's lesser tracts, so it seems not one of the least valuable. The topics are of the first importance, and he appears to labour at treating of them with perspicuity.

48. An Inquiry after Truth and Righteousness, and after the people whom the Lord establisheth, and will establish therein: in some queries on Isaiah lviii. and also on chap. liv. 4to. 1671. One sheet. Written in Reading gaol.

It is generally allowed that these two chapters relate to the glorious state of the true church, and our author endeavours to show how far what is there spoken of it, is applicable to the professors of spiritual Christianity at that time under persecution.

49. The holy Truth and People defended: and some of

the weapons and strength of the power of darkness broken and scattered, by the light and power of truth: in an answer to the chief passages in a letter, written to me, and replied to by me, before my imprisonment in this place; where I have been a prisoner above a year and a half, without any law broken, or cause given on my part, who only came innocently and peaceably to visit my friends in prison. By me, Isaac Penington, prisoner for the testimony of truth (for could I have denied truth, I might have avoided the snare), at Reading gaol. 1772. 4to. Five sheets and a half.

This piece being an answer to the book of an opponent, in which the author selects passage after passage, replying to each, cannot well be represented in miniature; but as it consists of a review of divers objections that have been made to the doctrine of Friends, it may be recommended to such as desire minutely to examine their tenets. The following short passage relates to a common calumny of our adversaries. "As for our denying Redemption by the blood of Christ--none upon the earth (as the Lord God knoweth) are so taught, and do so rightly and fully own redemption by the blood of Christ, as the Lord hath taught us to do. For we own the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, both outwardly and inwardly; both as it was shed on the cross, and as it is sprinkled in our consciences; and know the cleansing virtue thereof in the everlasting covenant, and in the light which is eternal: out of which light men have but a notion thereof, but do not truly know nor own it."

50. The ancient principle of Truth, or the light within asserted, and held forth according to true experience, and the faithful testimony of the Scriptures: in the answers to four questions. 1. What this light is which we testify of, and what is the nature of it? 2. What it doth inwardly in the heart? 3. How it

cometh to be lighted, set up, and increased there? 4. How it cometh to be diminished or extinguished in any? Also an appeal to the witness of God in all consciences, Which is the more sure word of prophecy; the testimony of the Scriptures without, or the voice and testimony of the light and Spirit of God within in the heart. By one once greatly distressed, but now at length, in the tender mercy of the Lord, effectually visited and redeemed by the light and power of truth. 8vo. 1672. Six sheets.

The fore-part of this tract is, as may be expected, an exposition of the principles of Friends. In the appeal, or comparison between the outward and inward guide, the preference is given to the latter. The passage in 2 Peter, i. 19. has given rise to some controversy; and standing as it does in our common translation, it is not surprising that it should; but there is great reason to suppose that it is wrongly translated, and that no comparison between the voice in the mount and any thing else, was intended by the apostle. Much of the arguments, however, of Isaac Penington, and several others of our early Friends, in favour of the superiority of the Spirit to the letter, may still stand good, though that which gave rise to them is done away. In fact, the professors of those times used this text to prove the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. Our Friends, who had learned the pre-excellence of the cause before the effect, opposed them on their own ground; and while both parties allowed that something was supposed to be preferred to the voice on the mount, they had reason on their side in asserting that it could not be the Scripture. It is with diffidence and fear, I presume to conclude, that such eminent men were not fully aware of the true meaning of the passage; but if the words, rightly translated, are literally these, "And we have more sure the prophetic word,"* the comparison "more sure" (which

* Καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον. Isaac Pening-

probably means, more confirmed) will relate to the increased confirmation which the primitive Christians had of prophecy, by having seen its accomplishment. I think the subsequent verses are also clearer by this means, and accord better with the scope of the whole passage.

There is a postscript to this work on the 18th verse of Rom. ix. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." This text the author attempts to rescue from the service of the Predestinarians: and contends against the doctrine which is generally drawn from this and other parts of that famous chapter: showing, 1. from the nature of God, 2. from his sending his Son, 3. from the universality of the covenant of light and life, and 4. from Scripture testimony, that the Almighty would have none to perish.

51. Naked Truth, or Truth nakedly manifesting itself, in several particulars, for the removing of hindrances out of the way of the simple hearted, that they may come to true knowledge, life, liberty, peace, and joy in the Lord, through the virtue and power of his precious truth, revealed and working in them. Given forth by way of question and answer. Whereunto are added some experiences, with some scriptures, very sweet, and necessary to be experienced in the gospel-state. As also a few words concerning the true Christ. And a few words in the bowels of tender love and goodwill to my native country. By a long mourner and traveller after, but at length a happy experiencer of, the Truth, as it is in Jesus. 8vo. 1674. Seven sheets and a half.

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ton has noticed that the Greek has 'prophetic word;' but he does not seem to have observed that our translators have transposed the words of the sentence, nor to have noticed the definite article τὸν, *the*, which our translators have rendered, *a*.

This is arranged under the following heads:

1. Concerning understanding the holy Scriptures truly and aright. 2. The illuminating and sanctifying Spirit. 3. The Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Scriptures. 4. The law of the Lord which is perfect, and converts the soul. 5. David's longings, as expressed in Psal. xlii. xliii. cxix. and other places. 6. The sun or fountain of spiritual light. 7. The word's being a fire and a hammer, to burn up the chaff and break the rocks in pieces. 8. God's writing his law in the heart. 9. The inward Light of God's Spirit. 10. The Ministers and Ministry of the Gospel. 11. Trying of spirits and searching the heart. 12. Things necessary to Salvation. 13. The true Gospel-church or society. 14. The way to salvation. 15. Christ's saving the soul. 16. Regeneration. 17. True Holiness. 18. Christ's works outwardly in the days of his flesh, and inwardly in the day and inward shining of the light of his Spirit in the heart. 19. The yoke or Cross of Christ. 20. Making our Calling and Election sure. 21. Prayer. 22. Repentance. 23. Faith. 24. Obedience. 25. Justification. 26. Good Works. 27. Love. 28. Meekness and Patience. 29. The knowledge of the New Covenant. 30. Its Fear. 31. Hope. 32. Peace. 33. Joy. 34. Poverty of Spirit and Humility.

The Experiences are on the several subjects of 1. The Seed of the Kingdom. 2. The Soul's Food. 3. God's power. 4. Temptations. 5. Prayer. 6. Justification and Sanctification. 7. Faith. 8. Obedience. 9. The Cross of Christ. 10. The Mystery of Life, and the Mystery of the Fellowship that is therein. 11. Judging according to appearance, and judging righteous judgment. The scripture passages, which our author truly terms sweet, and on each of which he comments, are the following: John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 3. John vi. 45. 1 John v. 12. John vi. 55, 56. Psalm xxxvi. 9. Isaiah lv. 1—3. John iv. 14. 1 John i. 2, 3. Matth. xi. 28

—30. 1. John v. 20. 2 Cor. iv. 6. also iii. 14. John viii. 31, 32. Rom. vi. 14. Isaiah iv. 5. also xii. 1—3. Rev. iii. 18. 1 John ii. 27. Psalm lxxxv. 9, to the end. Rev. iii. 20.

For a small specimen, an extract from the section on Joy may suffice.

"Quest. Which is the true Joy? Answ. The joy which flows from God's presence, and the work of his power in the heart, and the assured expectation which He gives of the full inheritance and glory of life everlasting. When the Bridegroom is present, when the soul is gathered home to Him, married to Him, in union with Him, in the holy, living fellowship; when He appears against the enemies of the soul, rising up against them, breaking, scattering them; and giving of his good things, filling with life, filling with love, filling with virtue, feasting the soul in the presence of the Father; oh! what sweet joy! oh! what fulness of joy is there then in the heart! 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

52. The Flesh and Blood of Christ, in the mystery and in the outward, briefly, plainly, and uprightly acknowledged, and testified to; for the satisfaction and benefit of the tender hearted, who desire to experience the quickening, healing and cleansing virtue of it. With a brief account concerning the people called Quakers, in reference both to principle and doctrine. Whereunto are added some few other things, which, by the blessing of God, may be experimentally found useful to the true pilgrims and faithful travellers out of the nature and spirit of this world. Written in true love and tenderness of Spirit. 8vo. 1675. Four sheets.

In the narrative at page 85, some account of this work is given. It may be added, that the 'Brief account concerning the people called Quakers,' is couched

in the assertion, and in the answer to the questions, which are here subjoined:

Assert. "We are a people of God's gathering, who (many of us) had long waited for his appearance, and had undergone great distress for want thereof."

Quest. 1. "But some may say, What appearance of the great God and Saviour, did ye want?

——— 2. "How did God appear to you?

——— 3. "How did God gather you?"

There are "a few words," concerning the Way of Peace mentioned Rom. iii. 17. and also, in the postscript, concerning the doings and sufferings of the despised people called Quakers: and lastly, "An Exhortation to true Christianity," having this assertion prefixed:

"It is easy to pretend to Christ; but to be a true Christian is very precious, and many tribulations and deep afflictions are to be passed through before it be attained unto, as those who are made so by the Lord experience."

53. To the Jews natural, and to the Jews spiritual; with a few words to England, my native country, &c. Some sensible, weighty queries, concerning some things very sweet and necessary to be experienced in the truly Christian state. Whereunto is added a postscript, containing some queries on Isaiah l. 10, 11. a scripture of deep counsel and concern to the darkened and distressed states of some among those that fear and obey the Lord. Whereunto are added, two or three queries touching the River and City of God, and the pure stillness, wherein God is known and exalted. As also some questions answered concerning the true church, ministry, and, maintenance,

under the Gospel; and about the Lamb's war. Written in travailing bowels. 8vo. 1677. Four sheets and a half, and one and a half; or six sheets.

"It is the joy of my heart," says our author in his preface, "to receive good from God, to be filled with his blessings, to have my cup overflow; and that others may be helped, refreshed, and gladded therewith; and, by the sweet taste thereof, led to wait for the opening of the same root and fountain of life in themselves, to yield living sap, and send forth living streams in them day by day." This sentence seems to set forth the spring and tendency of gospel-communications; the temper of the pastor, and the purpose of being fed. The reader may ask the question, Why should not the purpose be fulfilled in me?

It is not easy to abridge the address to the Jews natural. The author seems not to expect the restoration of their outward estate. Some may therefore ask, To what end have they been miraculously preserved a distinct people in their dispersion, through almost eighteen centuries? It is easier to ask than to answer, to doubt than to solve; but whichever may be the termination of their long outward captivity; either a glorious restoration to Palestine, and conversion to Christianity: or simply an inward redemption into its faith; they serve in the mean time as a grand monument of the truth of the things recorded of them in ancient time; and as a clear, though indirect testimony to the truth even of the religion which they refuse to embrace. Our author thus expresses his love to them. "You Jews," says he, "of the outward line of Abraham, whose return to the Lord my soul most earnestly desireth after, and for which I have most vehemently, and wrestlingly prayed to the Lord." The bent of the book is to show them that all the occurrences which befell their forefathers were typical. The Scripture references

are of course to the Old Testament. Eight queries, in our author's Socratic way, are propounded for their consideration. One of them is thus: "Query 3. Did not the Messiah come at the set time, at the time set by the holy Spirit of prophecy? Did He not come in the prepared body to do the will, and did He not do the will? And after his obedience to his Father, was He not cut off, though not for Himself? And after his cutting off, were not ye made desolate? Why were ye made desolate? Why did such a stroke come upon you, as never before? Oh! consider it. Read Dan. ix. 24, to the end of the chapter, and let him that readeth, understand."

The address to the Jews spiritual, sets out upon the passage in Gen. xlix. 10. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." This piece treats of the gathering of the Gentiles, and concludes with a warm, pathetic exhortation to the spiritually-minded. I cast my eye on the following: "Oh! who would lose the precious fear of the covenant, which is clean, and endureth for ever, and keepeth clean and chaste to the Lord for ever! And who would miss of one law which God hath to write in the hearts of his children, when every law is a law of life."——

There are in this piece three queries upon Psalm xlvi. 4, 5. 10; not specified in the title. In Penington's works a new title and preface is given with the "Sensible, weighty Queries," and those on Isaiah l. Most of these queries are short. The reader, by turning to the place, may see the weightiness of the passage in Isaiah: and will find our author's queries on it weighty also, and of great concernment to every religious professor.

54. The Everlasting Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and the blessed effects thereof, testified to from experience. 4to. 1678. One sheet and a half.

This is the short piece dated from Astrop, from which an extract is given at page 84.

55. A further testimony to Truth, revived out of the ruins of the Apostacy; or several things opened from the Spirit of Truth, touching the way of Life and Salvation; which will reach to the witness in the hearts of those whose spirits are quickened, and whose ears and understanding are opened by the Spirit and power of the Lord. Written in a deep sense, and tender love. 4to. 1680. i. e. posthumous.

The reader will find this piece divided into the following sections, though not denominated such:

"Some queries concerning Christ's righteousness, how it justifieth; whether as inwardly revealed and dwelling in the heart, or only as imputed, or both."

"Concerning the true Church and Ministry."

"An objection, concerning the *newness* of the way of Truth, answered; with a tender expostulating exhortation."

"A caution to those who are at any time touched with the power of Truth, how they afterwards hearken to and let in the enemy, and so thereby have the good seed stolen away, the true sense lost, and the mind filled with prejudices and stumbling-blocks instead thereof."

"An objection against the principle, which, in faithfulness to God, and in love to souls, we bear witness to, briefly answered."

"Some questions and answers concerning the new

covenant; opening the nature and way of it, as it is experimentally felt in the heart, and witnessed to in the holy Scriptures."

"A question or two, relating to Election, answered."

"A question answered concerning the ground of men's misunderstanding and wresting of Scriptures."

"Some questions, answers, and queries, concerning deceit and deceivers; as what they are, what discovers them, how man may come out of them, and be preserved from them," &c.

"That the way of life and salvation is freely held forth by God to all; and there is nothing in Him to let, stop, or discourage any man from receiving his truth, and giving up to Him in the faith and obedience of it; but very much to invite and encourage."

"Some questions answered concerning the Spirit of of Christ, and the spirit of the Scribes and Pharisees."

"Some questions answered concerning blasphemy and blasphemers."

"A question concerning miracles answered." This relates to the objection that our Friends wrought no miracles in support of their mission.

"Some further questions answered concerning the new covenant."

"A brief account concerning Silent Meetings; the nature, use, intent, and benefit of them."

This last is an informing section, on the subject referred to;—but hear our author, in his preface, respecting the information on religious subjects received merely by reading. "Dwell not in the notion, delight not

in the outward knowledge of the thing itself (though the knowledge be ever so sweet, pleasing, satisfactory, and demonstrative to the mind); but come to the everlasting spring. Feel the measure of life in thy particular, and that will lead thee to the spring of life, from whence the measure comes as a gift from the Father to thee, to bring thee to the Father. And singly for this end have been drawn to write what follows, in service to the Lord, in faithfulness to Him, in dear love to the souls of men."

The next is also a posthumous publication, which first appeared in the Folio edition of Isaac Penington's works, though written so long before as 1671. It is one of his longest works, viz.

56. Life and Immortality brought to light through the Gospel. Being a true discovery of the nature and ground of the religion and kingdom of Christ: in several weighty queries propounded, and other serious matters treated of, highly importing the eternal salvation of souls. Written by Isaac Penington, in the time of his imprisonment in Reading gaol. The date of this is 1671. As it was never separately published, the form and size cannot be given.

This work is in thirty sections. The first eight are queries—"1. On the state of the Church as it was in the Apostle's days, and was to be afterwards. 2. On Deut. xxix. and xxx. compared with Rom. x. 3. On Destruction and Salvation. 4. On Col. i. 27—29, (translating ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, *in* the Gentiles). 5. On the Way of Life, and mystery of the Gospel. 6. On righteousness or Justification. 7. Being under the Law, and under Grace. 8. For the professors of Christianity to consider of, and try their states by." These are interesting. The first begins thus: "Is thy spirit, heart, mind, soul, and body a temple for God to dwell in?

Who dwells in thy heart? Doth the Holy Spirit, or the unclean spirit?"

The 9th section is about "preaching the Gospel after the apostasy. 10. Concerning others not learning what God teacheth us [Friends] and concerning the way of his teaching us. 11. Of the three-fold appearance of Christ; under the law, in a body of flesh, and in his Spirit and power. 12. and 13. On Mounts Sinai and Sion. 14. The temple and sacrifices under the Gospel. 15. Questions concerning the light of Christ's Spirit answered, according to the Scriptures, and experience. 16. The way to know one's election, and to be fully assured of it; as also concerning election itself. 17. Concerning the priesthood of Christ, from Hebrews. 18. A brief relation of the estate or condition the Lord found many of us in, when He came to visit us, and make known to us the blessed ministration of his Spirit and power; and, of some of his dealings with us, in instructing and nurturing us up therein; with a few words of exhortation. 19. Concerning the Gospel-state. 20. Baptism, from Mark xvi. 16. 21. Some questions concerning the Gentiles' doing by nature the things contained in the law. 22. The rule of the children of the new covenant. 23. Queries concerning the law, or word, statutes, testimonies, judgments, &c. which David was so delighted in. 24. Observations on 2 Pet. iii. 14—16. 25. On the Gospel-ministry, or right teaching and learning the mystery of life and salvation. 26. On the old and new Covenant. 27. Queries on Rom. vi. vii. and viii. 28. A further testimony concerning the work of God upon our hearts, who are called Quakers. 29. A brief account of the ground of our worship, and how it cometh to pass that we cannot conform to the spirit of this world, or to the wills of men therein, but only to the Spirit and will of our God. 30. Some queries concerning knowing and owning the Lord Jesus Christ truly and aright, who hath been the only Sa-

viour and Redeemer in all ages and generations; and there never was, and never shall be any other."

Such are the subjects which are investigated in this book. In the eleventh section (to give a few touches of some of them), under the division treating of Christ's appearance under the law, there is probably as full a testimony to the oneness of the Son and Father, as can any where be met with. This is however a subject to be spoken and thought of with reverence. The same subject is spoken of with equal confidence, though on a different occasion, in the eighteenth. Thus, "very deep and weighty was that answer of Christ to Philip. When Philip said, '*Show us the Father, and it sufficeth. Hast thou not seen * me Philip*,' said Christ. '*How is it that thou sayest, Show us the Father? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also!*' Are they not one nature, one wisdom—one pure eternal Being? Can the one possibly be seen, and not the other? Though they may be distinguished in manifestation, in the hearts where they are received; is it possible they should be divided and separated the one from the other? Those that thus apprehend, plainly manifest, that they never received the true knowledge of the Father and Son: but have only notions and apprehensions of man's wisdom concerning them."

To the objection that the Friends do not use the Lord's Prayer, is this reply: "Truly, Christ, our Lord and Master, who taught his disciples to pray formerly, hath taught us also to pray that very prayer; though not to say the words outwardly in the will of men, or in our own will. He hath taught our hearts to breathe after the same things, even that the name of our heavenly Father might be hallowed or sanctified more and

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* I apprehend this is a typographical error, for known. The edition has not a few, if they abound in proportion with the parts I have examined.

more,—that He might reign more in men's spirits, and the kingdom of sin and Satan be thrown down; and that his *will* might *be done* even in our *earth, as it is done in heavenly places*, where all the hosts of God obey Him; and that we might have every day a portion of the heavenly bread, whereby our souls may live to Him, and convenient food and provision outward also, according as He seeth good, who careth for us.

"Now as we are kept in the light, and watch to the light which discovers things, we see what we are kept out of, and what we are at any time entangled in, and so trespass against the Lord; and then we are taught to beg pardon, and wait where pardon is to be received, through our Advocate, even as God hath taught us to forgive. Yet this doth not embolden any of the little ones to sin; but they pray *that they may not be led* (or fall) *into temptation;* but may witness deliverance from the *evil*, which the enemy watcheth to betray and insnare them with. And these cries are put up to Him who is ready to hear; and who *can* answer and fulfil the desires of them that love and fear Him; and indeed not only so, but they are also put up in faith that, in the way of God, the soul *shall obtain* and receive what it prayeth and waiteth for."

From the section on "the Gospel-state," a part of the summing-up or conclusion, after a glorious description* of that state, may serve as a specimen.

"Now if any one doubt concerning the truth of these things, this word is in my heart to such, *Come and see.* Oh! come and see the glory of the Lord, and the power of his life, and righteousness of his kingdom, which is now revealed, after the long night of darkness! Oh! blessed, blessed, be his name, who hath caused his

* Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God, Psalm lxxxvii. 3.

light to shine, and opened the eye which was once blind to see it!"

"*Quest.* But how may I come to see the glory of the Gospel-state?"

"*Answ.* Come to the seed, and wait to feel and receive the power which raiseth the seed in the heart; and bringeth the heart, soul, mind, and spirit, into union with the seed."

"*Quest.* But how may I come to the seed; and how may I wait aright, to feel and receive the power which raiseth it?"

"*Answ.* Mind that in thee which searcheth the heart, and what it reacheth to, and quickeneth in thee; what it draweth thee from, what it draweth thee to; how it showeth thee thine own inability to follow, and how it giveth ability when thou art weary of toiling and labouring of thyself."————

————"The Lord make thee sensible of the visits, drawings, and leadings of his Holy Spirit; and guide thy feet thereby into the way of truth and peace. *Amen.*"

The section on Baptism will be easily conceived to recommend spiritual, and not water-baptism. On this subject much has been written by Friends; but those who wish to investigate the subject deeply, as it may be supported by Scripture authority, would do well to peruse this dissertation on it.

After the series of the thirty sections, there is a query, "Concerning Imputation," a famous subject, the occasion of much debate in the Christian world, and concerning which no view of our author's belief has yet been given in these pages. With this query therefore

may be concluded this short review of the important and instructive work, "Life and Immortality brought to light by the Gospel."

"In what state was Abraham when faith was imputed to him for righteousness? Was he in the ungodly state; in the state of unbelief and disobedience to the Spirit and power of the Lord: or was he in the sense of God's power, in the belief of Him who could raise up his son from the dead; and, in the performance of obedience unto Him, giving up his son at the Lord's command?"

"And in what state must we be, when we witness faith imputed to us also for righteousness? Must we not be in the sense of the same power, and in the belief of it, and in the obedience of faith? Read Rom. iv. and consider: for the righteousness of the Gospel is not imputed in, or by, the works of the law, but in the obedience of faith."

"It is true, God justifieth the ungodly; through faith He makes them just and godly; but doth He justify or accept them in the ungodly state? Doth He not first make a change in them by his power? Doth He not first, in some measure, purify their hearts by faith?"

The next posthumous work, published in the general collection, is also of considerable magnitude. It is without a title, but appears to have been intended as an answer to some questions, and a reply to some animadversions of a certain person whose name is now lost. We may call it

57. A Reply to queries and animadversions, written in the year 1667.

It appears that our author's antagonist, or probably a friendly objector, had been pleading for the value and

sufficiency of that knowledge of religion which is merely derived from an acquaintance with the scriptures; because the superiority, and indispensable need, of the Spirit, pervade the whole of this Reply. Like many of our author's books, it is arranged under various heads. They are these: "The rule of the new covenant, or that which God hath appointed to be the rule to the children of the new covenant.—Christ.—The form of sound words.—Inward impressions.—The Light.—Justification.—God's love to mankind.—Baptism.—Perfection."

The animadversions appear by the replies to have been ten, and it seems probable that their author was a member of some church or congregation, whose tenets he was endeavouring to defend.

This is a choice performance, and it is rather difficult to select extracts few enough to suit the conciseness of this review. The following, on two points (if the latter may be reverently called so), on which many people think themselves able to speak, may be acceptable to the reader who is either already imbued with the principles of Friends, or is desirous of knowing them with precision.

"Yet (though we do own Christ to be the rule) we do not deny making use of the scriptures to try doctrines and forms of religion by; but know that what is of God doth and will agree therewith; and what doth not agree therewith is not of God; and that our forefathers in the faith were led to batter the superstitions and idolatries of the Papists, by the testimony of the scriptures. And we have also the testimony of the scriptures with us, both to the light and Spirit within; and against forms formerly invented, or now practised, out of the life and power. But we believe the Spirit to be a touchstone beyond the scriptures, and to be that which giveth ability to try and discern not only words, but spirits.——And for calling the scrip-

tures the Word of God, we cannot but look upon it as an improper expression; they being many words, not the one Word; and Christ is called in the scripture, not only the Word God,* but the Word of God. And if, in the fear of the Lord, and true sense, we keep herein to the expressions of scripture, and its form of words which are sound, surely we cannot justly be blamed for so doing."

This is an extract from the first section. The second, entire, runs thus:

"Christ is that word of eternal life, which was glorified with the Father before the world was; who, in the full appointed time, took up the body of flesh prepared by the Father, to do the will in; and did the will in it, fulfilling all righteousness, to the satisfaction of the very heart of the Father; for whose name's sake the sins of believers are pardoned. And this same Word of eternal life, and no other, which took that body of flesh upon Him, is also manifested, and dwelleth in the hearts of his saints; who, [he might more clearly have said, and], as they receive Him in the faith which is of Him, dwells in them richly, manifesting in the vessel the treasures of his divine wisdom and knowledge. Now, this is the precious knowledge of Christ indeed; and this is it every one is to wait for: to find a measure of the same life, the fulness whereof dwells in Him bodily, dwelling in our mortal bodies, and making us like unto Him, in spirit, nature, and conversation. And he that knoweth not, but opposeth this, in any of its appearances or operations, either in himself or others, is so far of the dark anti-christian spirit."

In the section on the love of God to mankind,

* This precise expression is not found in our Bible. It shows however, the author's anti-Socinian turn; and probably refers to John i. 1.

absolute reprobation is impugned; but I conclude these extracts with a few touches of the section on Perfection.

"Christ is a perfect physician, and is able to work a perfect cure on the heart that believeth in Him, and waiteth upon Him.—Christ likewise bids his disciples be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect; and the apostle bids men perfect holiness in the fear of God, that they might be fully separated from, and not so much as touch, the unclean thing."

"Did Christ cure perfectly outwardly, in the days of his flesh; and shall He not cure perfectly inwardly in the days of his Spirit? Yes, certainly. The lame, the deaf, the blind, the dumb, the lepers, waiting upon Him in the way of his covenant, shall be cured by Him as perfectly inwardly, as ever the others were outwardly."

The next piece in the collection, as indeed all the remainder which I shall have occasion to mention, is also posthumous, viz.

58. A few Experiences concerning some of the weighty things relating to God's everlasting kingdom. Given forth in the true and tender love, for the help of any such of the race of the true travellers, as may stand in need thereof.

This was written in Reading Goal, in 1671. It consists of the following particulars: "1. A faithful testimony concerning the true and pure way of life; with breathings for such as have desires after it, and yet are strangers to it. 2. Concerning the perfecting of God's work in the heart. 3. Concerning the true Christ; how it may be certainly and infallibly known which is He. 4. Some queries to such as affirm the scriptures to be the only rule, and deny the Spirit, the Seed of the kingdom, the new covenant, the holy leaven of life,

the law written in the heart, to be the rule of the children of the new covenant. 5. Concerning the Light, wherewith Christ, the Life, enlightens every man. 6. A few words further concerning Perfection. 7. Concerning imputation of righteousness. 8. Some queries concerning the time and work of Reformation. 9. Some queries concerning the Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of the Father (it being one and the same Spirit), for those who take themselves to be Christians (and under the gospel-dispensation) to consider and examine themselves by, that they may not be deceived, either concerning their present estate here, or the eternal estate of their souls hereafter: seeing the apostle so expressly saith, "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. viii. 10. Of the true way, the way of holiness, the way of life, and of the true teaching and knowledge. 11. Concerning separation from the spirit and ways of the world."

The last extract given from the preceding work, was intended to show our author's, and the Society's views, on the subject of Perfection. A few queries, selected from §. 2. of this work, may be a suitable supplement.

"Is it not the will of God that his people and children should be sanctified in soul, in body, in spirit? Did not [Christ] bid them pray, 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven? And would He never have them believe and expect that it should be done in earth, as it is in heaven?"

"Doth not he who hath the true, pure, living hope (which anchors within the veil), purify himself, even as He is pure?"

The 9th section is very weighty. The third of its queries may serve as a specimen.

"Doth the Spirit of Christ dwell in thee? Hath the

stronger man cast the strong man out of thee, and taken possession of thy heart, and doth He dwell therein? Then thou mayest truly say, that thou art built up by God an habitation for Him in the Spirit. Then thou art washed and cleansed by Him from thy filthiness; and lusts or vain thoughts do not lodge in thee. For the holy Spirit of Christ will not dwell where such things lodge; but 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, in whom I will dwell and walk.'"

The next piece is also a production of the same imprisonment.

59. A treatise concerning Christ's teachings, and Christ's law, with some other things of weighty importance, particularly mentioned after the preface, written by I. P. prisoner at Reading goal for the testimony of truth.

This, like most of our author's tracts, is divided into numbered sections. "1. Concerning God's teachings. 2. Concerning the law of Christ. 3. A brief relation concerning myself, in reference to what has befallen me in my pursuit after Truth. 4. A question about preaching the everlasting gospel answered. 5. Concerning Christ's ministry or priesthood. 6. Concerning the true knowledge of Christ. 7. A few words more concerning the right way of knowing, as it is witnessed unto in the scriptures, and experienced in the hearts of those that truly and livingly know the Lord. 8. Concerning Christ's righteousness, which is the righteousness of all his saints. 9. Of the Grace of the Gospel. 10. A question answered concerning real holiness. 11. Concerning the law of sin in the fleshly mind, and the law of life and holiness in the renewed mind, and whence each have their strength. 12. Concerning God's gathering

us home to Himself, who are a people despised and rejected of men, and in scorn by them called Quakers. 13. A few words concerning the worship which our God hath taught us."

The third section of this work is already given, nearly the whole of it, at page 10. If we take sections 5 and 13, they will form an extract which will comprehend a large portion of what, speaking in the usual manner, would be called Quaker-divinity.

Sect. 5. "Christ is made by God a minister or high priest over the spiritual Israel of God. Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (as Heb. vii. 16, and chap. viii. 2), and He ministers with his Spirit and power unto, and in all his. So that he that knows Christ's ministry, knows the power, the life, the Spirit in which He ministers; but he that is not acquainted with these, is yet to learn to know Christ aright, and to believe in Him unto life and salvation; which are wrapped up, comprehended, revealed, and communicated in the power wherewith He ministers. For the very beginning of Christ's ministry is in the Spirit and power of God, whereby He redeems out of the spirit and power of satan; and to this, men are to be turned, if they will witness salvation by Jesus Christ; even to the light and power of God's holy Spirit, which breaks the darkness and strength of the kingdom of satan in the heart. For indeed, all literal professions, beliefs, knowledges, and practices, out of the life and power, satan can transform himself into, and uphold and maintain his kingdom under, in the hearts of men; but the inward light and power of life breaks it, where the minds of people are by the Spirit of the Lord turned thereto, and subjected under its rule and government."

Sect. 13. "Our worship is a deep exercise of our spirits before the Lord, which doth not consist in an ex-

ercising the natural part or natural mind, either to hear or speak words, or in praying according to what we of ourselves can apprehend or comprehend concerning our needs; but we wait, in silence of the fleshly part, to hear with the new ear what God shall please to speak inwardly in our own hearts, or outwardly through others, who speak with the new tongue, which He unlooseth and teacheth to speak; and we pray in the Spirit, and with the new understanding, as God pleaseth to quicken, draw forth, and open our hearts towards himself."

"Thus our minds being gathered into the measure, or gift of grace, which is by Jesus Christ; here we appear before God; and here our God and his Christ is witnessed in the midst of us. This is that gathering in the name, which the promise is to; where we meet together, waiting with one consent on the Father of life, bowing and confessing to Him in the name of his Son; and that fleshly part, that fleshly understanding, that fleshly wisdom, that fleshly will, which will not bow, is chained down and kept under by the power of life, which God stretcheth forth over it, and subdueth it by. So then there is the sweet communion enjoyed, the sweet love flowing, the sweet peace reaped;—the sweet joy and refreshment in the Lord our righteousness, who causeth righteousness to drop down from heaven, and truth to spring up out of the earth. And so our Father is felt blessing us, blessing our land, blessing our habitations, delighting in us and over us to do us good; and our land yields its increase to the Lord of life, who hath redeemed it, and planted the precious plants and seeds of life in it."

60. A question answered, concerning reading the Scriptures aright. No date.

This is a short piece. The question is, "How may a man know whether he readeth the scriptures to his advantage and benefit; or whether he readeth them to his disadvantage or hurt?"

The following short quotation further opens the nature, and the cause of this question:

"He that reads the Scriptures in a true measure of life received from God, he reads them aright; and whenever he so readeth, it is to his benefit. He that readeth out of that, readeth [or may read] to his hurt: that being then up in him which misunderstands, misapplies, and grows conceited, wise, and confident, according to the flesh; and so he is thereby liable to, and in great danger of, setting up his interpretations instead of the meaning of God's Spirit; and of condemning that which doth not assent and agree therewith [with them], though it be ever so necessary and precious a truth of God, and ever so fully demonstrated by his Spirit, to those who are in the true faith and understanding."

The Jews, the Scribes, and Pharisees, are given as practical instances of reading to their hurt. The remedy, and the knowledge that a man has it, will be easily supposed to lie in the enlightened spiritual understanding; but for the application I must refer to the piece itself. There is subjoined, "A few words to such as complain for want of Power." This short and excellent piece (vol. ii. p. 540, of 4to. edition, and vol. iv. p. 336, of the 8vo.), after a lively testimony to the source of Power, the power of the endless life, thus concludes: "So that it concerns all people seriously to consider, whether the reason why they have not power, be not because they do not receive Christ, who hath all power in heaven and earth given to Him. For many talk of Christ; but few come to Him in the Father's drawing; so will not receive Him: like the Jews, who waited for his appearance, and yet rejected Him when He came."

61. Somewhat relating to Church-government, wherein the necessity, usefulness, and blessed effects of the

true Church-government, are here and there hinted at; and *this* clearly manifested, That the authority and power of Christ's spirit in his church is no usurped or antichristian authority, nor contrary to the true light and liberty of any particular member, but a cherisher and preserver of it. As also remarks on some passages in a late book entitled, "Antichrist's transformations within, discovered by the light within." Wherein the antichristian transformer is made manifest, and the light within cleared from his false imputations and pretences to it. Written in obedience to Him that is true, who hath given a certain testimony against him that is false, to very many in this his day; and among others to me also, whom He hath pleased to gather and own among his children and servants in truth.

This book, though not published during the author's life, was probably written about the time, when some who had been members of the society of Friends were beginning to find fault with the outward order and discipline that was then arising in the society. By the citations made from the opponent's book, it appears that the general argument of it was, that a subjection to the regulations of the body, is an infringement of the liberty of the individual, and an inducement for his forsaking the immediate teachings of the light within, for the dominion of men; whom he denies to have any such authority committed to them by the alone Head of the church. The general reply is, that the true Spirit in the Church does not contradict the same Spirit in the members; and that the superior degree which results from the union of many enlightened minds, helps, protects, and cherishes the lesser measure in individuals. This principle is of course variously held forth according to the various branches of the adversary's attack.

There doth not appear to be any particular practice

of the society touched upon, except the standing or kneeling of the Friends in a meeting, and the uncovering of the men, during the time of public prayer. This practice had been opposed by John Perrot many years before 1675, which I have conceived to be about the time of the writing of this piece by Isaac Penington; because connected with it is another piece in reply to John Pennyman, an adversary whose book bears that date. This is, in the order of the works,

62. Some misrepresentations of Me concerning Church-government cleared; and the power and authority of God's Spirit, in governing his church, testified to; by one whom it hath pleased the Lord to make a member of the church which He hath gathered, and and preserveth by his own Almighty arm; who accounteth it his duty and honour in the Lord to be subject to the government and ordering of his Spirit and power in his church.

I. P.

The reader may observe that part of the title of Penington's book, No. 13, "An Examination of the Grounds or Causes, &c." is as follows: "Whereunto somewhat is added about the authority and government, Christ excluded out of his church: which occasioneth somewhat concerning the true church government. 1660." "Now this latter part," says he, "hath been so misrepresented as if, because the wrong church-government was excluded, the exclusion of all church-government was intended by me, there being no notice taken of my owning the true church-government; but only some passages of my disowning the false produced: as if they intended to overturn and deny all church-government."

It is remarkable how, in different ages, and on different occasions, the opposing spirit avails itself of partial citation. But to advert to the subject, our author's opponent here was John Pennyman, who was endea-

vouring to show that his former sentiments on discipline were opposite to those which he held at the time of this controversy. Twelve citations are adduced of Pennyman from our author's "Examination," &c. These Penington confirms by some addition to each; and then to each superadds a question in order further to open his intention. Thus the work is one of those which are clear, and pleasant to be read, for the order in which it is written. The least citation, with its correspondent confirmation and question, is rather too long to be given here. Subjoined are some considerations on Church-government. Pennyman had joined the Society; but taking offence at some things which he thought he had discovered to be wrong in it, had left it, and had become an opposer: though still laying claim to extraordinary revelations. He was contemporary with Rogers, another opposer, and his works are still extant. There appears in this book of our author's a benevolent and compassionate regard for his adversary, whom he rather bewails than inveighs against. "I have been," says he, "in a great travail of spirit for J. Pennyman, the Lord having showed me his spirit and state; and this hath been the cry of my heart to the God and Father of my life for him, in great brokenness and tears, many times; Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does. He knows not what Spirit and power he acts against, nor what spirit and power it is that leads him." In another place he says, "Truth teacheth that modesty, temperance, humility, tenderness, and sobriety, that I dare not despise the voice that pretends to the anointing in any, until I have made trial of it. Yea, John Pennyman's voice and testimony, I durst not condemn, until the Lord my God, in the unerring light and pure springing life, manifested unto me that it was not of Him, but of the transforming enemy."

63. The Seed of God, and of his Kingdom, treated and testified of, according to the Scriptures of truth, and

according to true experience felt in the heart from the God of Truth.

This piece will admit of some analysis. It first treats of the Seed of the kingdom by answers to the following questions: "1. What the Seed is? 2. Who is the sower of this seed? 3. Where is this seed to be found? 4. In what sorts of earth is this heavenly seed sown? 5. In what sort of earth it brings forth good fruit to perfection? 6. How may the ground that is bad be made good? Was not the ground which is now good, once bad; and may not the ground that is now bad be made good?"

The work is next distributed under three heads; namely,

1. What is hid or wrapped up in this seed.
2. The nature of it.
3. The effects.

"Indeed," says the author, "there is so much wrapped up in it, as the heart of man cannot conceive, much less the tongue utter; yet somewhat have I felt, and somewhat is upon my heart to say in answer to this thing, under these four heads following:"

"First, The glory of the kingdom of Heaven, the glory of the everlasting kingdom, is hid and wrapped up in it, as in a seed.——"

"Secondly, The divine nature of God Almighty is hid and wrapped up in it."

"Thirdly, All the graces and virtues of God's holy Spirit are hid and wrapped up in this one seed. There is nothing God can require of the soul, nor [and] nothing the soul can desire of God, but is hid and wrapped up in this seed.————To make this a little more plain and evident————I shall instance in some particulars:"

"1. The pure, living knowledge of the Father,

and of his Son Christ Jesus, is wrapped up in this seed."

"2. Faith, the true faith, the lively, effectual saving, conquering faith, which gives victory over the world, and over the devil and his temptations, is contained or wrapped up in this seed."

"3. The pure fear, the holy fear, the heavenly fear, which is of a clean and heavenly nature, and endureth for ever, is also in this seed."

"4. The pure, divine love is in it."

"5. The pure hope, the hope of the upright, the hope which makes not ashamed, the hope which goes within the veil, and is a sure and steadfast anchor there, staying the mind upon the Lord, who keeps such in perfect peace; this hope is contained in, and springeth from the seed."

"6. The true patience, which obtains the crown, which makes perfect and entire, so that there is nothing wanting where it hath its perfect work, (James i. 4.); the patience which enables quietly to suffer any chastisement from God, or any affliction, or hard dealing from men, it is contained in, and given with, this seed."

"7. The Lamb's meekness is in it."

"8. Here poverty of spirit is witnessed."

"9. Here mercifulness towards others is experienced:" [I give this entire] "for he that is brought hither lives only by mercy; and he that lives by mercy, and is daily what he is by mercy, cannot but be merciful to others."

"10. Here the true mourning and lamenting after the Lord, and his precious life and presence; and because of the presence or power of that which hinders the growth of the seed, and the soul's union with and enjoyment of the Lord in it, is witnessed."

"11. The true hungering and thirsting after righteousness ariseth from this seed."

"12. The true sobriety, moderation, and temperance, ariseth from this seed."

"Lastly, To name no more, the cross which mortifies and crucifies to the world, and to sin, can only be taken up in the seed, or by virtue of the seed."

"Fourthly, The new covenant which God makes with the new Israel, by which He makes the heart new, and writes his law in it, and takes away the stony heart, and heals all their backslidings, and loves them freely, and puts his Spirit within them, causing them to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes and judgments, and do them; even the holy agreement of the soul with God in Christ Jesus, is in this seed.————Keep here, thou never goest out of the holy agreement with God and with Christ; for in this grace and truth, in this seed of life, there is nothing that disagrees with them."

The other two sections, concerning the nature and the effects of the Seed, are somewhat less capable of abridgment, and I have given to this work its full proportion of notice. It concludes with "Some queries [thirty-two in number] concerning God's Kingdom, whereby the Seed thereof may be the better illustrated and understood."

64. An Epistle to all serious professors of the Christian religion: wherein a brief touch of my knowledge, sense, belief, and experience concerning the God-head, the offering up of the Lord Jesus Christ in his body on the tree, as a propitiatory sacrifice to the Father, and the imputation of his righteousness to those who believe in his name and power, is nakedly laid before them: wherein I am not alone, but one with those who have so learned and experienced the same in the leadings and light of his Holy Spirit. Written in love to them, that they might have the better understanding of us, as to these things, and might not think otherwise, either of us, or of the Truth of our God, which we bear witness to, than there is cause, to their own hurt and prejudice.

To the curious in what generally goes by the name of Christian divinity, and too many such there are who do not like Penington seek after the experience of the life of religion in their hearts, this is an interesting piece, because it touches on controverted subjects. Since the time of Isaac Penington, the 7th verse in the 5th chapter of John's first epistle has been shown to be an interpolation, by as much proof as the nature of the case will admit; namely, that it is not found, as the learned are now generally agreed, in any Greek manuscript written before the year 1500. This has been admitted by one of its admirers, and a great biblical critic.* How it got into our bibles is not material here. The doctrine which it contains, as Richard Claridge among our own writers observes, is to be found in other parts of the New Testament. It is probable that our early Friends, in common with most other people then, received it as Scripture, Claridge and Penn however have noticed the doubts which had begun to prevail.

Penington, treating in this epistle of the Godhead, takes 1 John v. 7, as Scripture; and, having quoted it, adds, "This, I believe from my heart, and have infallible demonstrations of; for I know three, and feel three in spirit, even an eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which are but one eternal God. And I feel them also one, and have fellowship with them (through the tender mercy of the Lord) in their life, and in their redeeming power. And here I lie before the Lord in the sensible life, not desiring to know and comprehend notionally; but to feel the thing inwardly, truly, sensibly, and effectually: yea, indeed, this is to me far beyond what I formerly knew notionally concerning them; and I cannot but invite others hither."

"Now, consider seriously, if a man from his heart believe thus concerning the eternal Power and God-

* Bengel.

head, that the Father is God, the Word God, the Holy Spirit God; and that these are one eternal God, waiting so to know God, and to be subject to him accordingly; is not this man in a right frame of heart towards the Lord, in this respect? Indeed, Friends, we do know God sensibly and experimentally to be a Father, Word, and Spirit, and we worship the Father, in the Son, by his own Spirit, and here meet with the seal of acceptance with Him."

——— "Concerning the offering of the Lord Jesus Christ without the gates of Jerusalem, I do exceedingly honour and esteem that offering, believing it had relation to the sins of the whole world, and was a propitiatory sacrifice to the Father therefore [for them.] And surely he that is redeemed out of the world up to God by Christ, cannot deny that Christ was his ransom, and that he was bought with a price, and therefore is to glorify God, with his body and spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. vi. 20." He adduces also 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, and Heb. ix. 14, and then goes on, "This we do own singly and nakedly, as in the sight of the Lord; though I must confess we do not lay the sole stress upon that which is outward and visible (though we truly and fully acknowledge it in its place,) but upon that which is inward and invisible. ——— The outward flesh is not the meat indeed, nor the outward blood the drink indeed; but it is the Spirit, the life, the substance, which the birth that is born of the Spirit feeds upon, and lives by. Oh! consider seriously, and wait on the Lord rightly to understand that Scripture, John vi. 63. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

It would be difficult to abridge what the author says concerning Imputation. It may suffice to hint that it is not to sinful persons; but to such as turning to the grace which visits them in their sinful state, are by it in measure transplanted from the evil root, into the holy, where

they partake of the virtue and fatness of the true olive-tree.

65. A Reply to an answer of some queries given forth by me, I. P., concerning the Gospel-baptism; with answers to some other queries returned in a paper subscribed N. B.

There is a date to this, which shows it to have been one of his latest writings, viz. 18th 5th month, 1679. The author first states his own query, then his respondent's answer, and next his own reply; and so throughout. Next he answers N. B.'s questions, and winds up with the sense given to him of the "mystery of Christ, and of his enlightening, quickening, circumcising, and baptizing." But an abridgment of this piece would be difficult.

(*a*) Five Epistles to Friends of Chalfont, dated in 1666, 1670, and 1671, most of them from prison, follow next in the second Quarto volume; and then a short peice entitled,

(*b*) "Some Queries concerning compulsion in religion," written in Reading gaol in 1670.

One can scarcely call these books, nor probably the following short pieces.

(*c*) Concerning the dispensation of the Gospel, or the dispensation of the Son in Spirit, which is the last dispensation, whereby the mystery of God, the mystery of the work of redemption is finished in the heart, all created anew inwardly, all subdued that is contrary to God, the soul brought into, or translated into the everlasting kingdom, and the kingdom at length delivered up to the Father, and God becomes all in all; where all names cease, and the pure eternal Being is known, united to, and lived in, after an unutterable manner. Dated 18th 9th month, 1678.

(*d*) Some Experiences which it hath pleased the Lord to give me concerning his way, his truth, his church, and people, against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail.

In this review most of the tenets of the Society of Friends have been occasionally displayed. The postscript of the piece last mentioned relates to a subject which has often occasioned a sneer, and sets that subject in a clear light. On this account, and because it abounds with unbounded philanthropy, the reader will not probably be displeased to see here.

"I do not say that I as a man am infallible, or that any of us as men are infallible; but God's light, God's grace, God's truth, God's Spirit, God's wisdom and power, is infallible; and so far as we partake of that, are gathered into and abide in that, we partake of that which is infallible.——And Oh! let not men rest in, or be contented with, that knowledge which is fallible, but press after unity and fellowship with the Lord in his infallible Spirit; there being no true union nor fellowship with Him in any thing that is fallible."

"Oh! that Protestants, Papists, Jews, Turks, Indians, did all know and own this light, that there might be an end of the darkness and misery, wherewith mankind hath been so long overwhelmed; and happiness, both in particular nations and in the whole world, might be experienced in the stead thereof. For men's erring from the light and Spirit of God hath been the cause of all their misery; and their returning to the light and Spirit of God (from which all have erred) will take away the cause of their misery; and in it (as they faithfully [become] subject to the Lord and travel therein) they shall find his power, love, and mercy revealed, towards their restoring unto happiness."

"31st 5th month, 1679."

The last piece in the volume, and probably the last

piece which this diligent hand ever wrote, is the following, of which, for the latter reason, I shall give a very copious extract.

(*e*) Concerning the times and seasons, both which have been, and which are yet to be.

This piece appears to have been written at differferent times. The first part, and which more immediately answers to the title, is as follows:

"When God made man in his own image, placing him in Paradise, and giving him dominion over the works of his hands; then was a time of great joy to Adam and Eve, and should have still been so to them, and all mankind, had they continued in the state wherein they were created."

"When Eve, and by her means Adam, hearkened to the voice of the serpent, disobeyed the Lord their Creator, aspiring after wisdom and the knowledge of good and evil, out of God's way; then was a season of misery to Adam, and all his posterity; the holy and heavenly image being lost, and a cursed image gained in the stead thereof, and so man thrust out of Paradise, and the blessedness thereof, into the earth, which was cursed for man's sake. So in this state sin and the curse is man's portion, instead of the holiness and blessedness which his Creator had allotted him."

"When God promised the blessed Seed, and revealed himself to the fathers in the faith, begetting sons to himself, who heard his voice, obeyed and walked with Him; then was a blessed time and season to them, though sin and death reigned in the world. But when the sons of God also forget Him, and mingled their seed with a corrupted world, then the deluge came, sweeping away all but Noah with his family, and the creatures saved in the ark."

"When the Lord chose the Jews to be a people to himself, from amidst all nations, delivering them by his out-stretched arm out of Egypt, destroying Pharoah and his host, and led them through the wilderness, fitting the succeeding generation for the good land, bringing them into it, blessing and establishing them in it, while they feared him and walked in covenant with Him, then was a blessed time and season with that people. But when they provoked God, brought his judgments often, and at last utter ruin and desolation upon themselves; then were seasons of great misery and distress, and at last of utter destruction to them."

"While the Gentiles were cast off, and were no people, being of the corrupt seed which God hath not chosen, nor had any delight in, and while they knew not the living God, but worshipped stocks and stones, and so were liable to the pouring down of his wrath and indignation upon all occasions, and to utter ruin and destruction, when their iniquities were full; it was a sad time and season with them, wherein they were estranged from the life of God, and his holy covenant of promise, and were without God in the world."

"When the Lord preached the gospel to the Gentiles, by his holy apostles and ministers, manifesting Christ to them, the hope of glory, the mystery hid from ages and generations, engrafting them into the holy vine and olive tree, giving them to partake of the sweetness and fatness thereof, even of the riches of his grace and goodness in his Son, who is eternal life, and gives eternal life to all his; then was such a time and season of love, grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ (both towards Jews and Gentiles), as had not been known in the world before."

"When the Christian church apostatized, the love in many waxing cold, men, minding the name of Christi-

anity, and form of Godliness, but not the life and power, and so the Lord was provoked against them, to remove their candlestick out of its place, and give up the outward court to the Gentiles; and so the Spirit was lost or departed from, the life lost, the power lost, the everlasting gospel hid from men's eyes, and darkness and men's inventions set up instead thereof in nations, tongues, and people, and the witnesses to any appearances of God's living truth and holy power persecuted; then was a sad time, then was a season of death and darkness reigning over all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, and the cup of fornication drunk by them all, and all generally bewitched by it, except those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. This was the greatest time of darkness (wherein the mystery of iniquity most deeply wrought, in the deepest ways of deceit) that ever was in the world."

"When the church comes again out of the wilderness, when the spirit and power of God builds up again the gospel-church in its primitive glory; when the everlasting gospel is preached again to all nations, kindreds, tongues and languages, in the authority and power of God; when the Spirit of the Lord is poured out plentifully on his sons and daughters, and they prophesy, walk, and live in it; when God dwells and walks in his people, and his true light shines in them, dispelling the darkness thoroughly, and filling them with the glory and majesty of the Lord; and they ascend up, out of the world's spirit and nature, into his Spirit and nature, even in the sight of their enemies, and the full wrath of the Lamb be poured out on Babylon, and the full glory revealed in Sion; then shall there be such a day of brightness, and pure heavenly glory, as shall dazzle the eyes of all beholders."

"But the passing away of this night, and the bringing forth of this day, will be very terrible and dreadful, both in particulars and in nations. The kingdoms

of this world must indeed become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; but it will require great power to bring it about. The wrath and strength of the spirit of darkness will be working against the Lord and his power to the utmost; and the more it works against the Lord and his power, the more will the Lord's power and the wrath of the Lamb be revealed against that spirit, and against all its devices and undertakings against the counsel and power of the Lord. Oh! blessed are they that are of the Lamb's nature and spirit, of his righteousness and meekness, for the wrath of the Lamb will not be kindled against them; but he will be a munition of rocks unto them, and their inward life shall be preserved, and they shall enjoy peace with the Lord, in the midst of all that shall outwardly befall them."

"Mesborough, in Kent, 22d 6th month, 1679."

The second part, which is somewhat longer, is dated three days after the foregoing. It describes the state that will be safe when the divine jndgments are poured upon nations; and also sets forth the class that will not be able to find a shelter in that trying time. Then follows, after some benevolent aspirations, an addresss, by way of advice to such as "are touched with the fear of the Lord, and the sense of his righteous judgments due to this nation." A short postscript to this part thus concludes the volume:

"The gospel-religion is very precious, being inwardly felt and experienced in the life and power of it: but a bare profession of it, out of the life and power of godliness, is of no value in the sight of God, nor is it of any profit or advantage to the soul."

THE END.

SELECTIONS

FROM THE

LETTERS AND OTHER PAPERS

OF

WILLIAM GROVER;

PRECEDED BY

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF HIS LIFE.

"Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."—*Heb.* vi. 12.

Philadelphia:

THOMAS KITE, 64, WALNUT STREET.

1831.

Copy

Our late friend WILLIAM GROVER, *was so justly esteemed in our religious Society, that it has been thought the following Selection from his Letters and Papers would be acceptable to his friends. They may instructively revive the recollection of his Christian labours and example amongst us; and of his earnest solicitude for the preservation of his friends from all that is evil, and for their growth in true piety.*

J. F.

Tottenham, 8th month, 1828.

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SELECTIONS, &c.

CHAP. 1.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF WILLIAM GROVER.

William Grover, the son of William and Elizabeth Grover, was born at Brighthelmstone in Sussex, the 15th of the 11th month, 1752. Very few particulars are known of his early life. After leaving school, he was placed as an apprentice with Edmund Rack, a Friend, who was a retail country shopkeeper, at Bardfield in Essex. Soon after the expiration of the term, he engaged himself as an assistant to Samuel Day, who was also a member of our religious society, and in a similar business, and who lived at Stansted Mount-Fitchet, in the same county. After serving him with diligence and integrity for several years, he became a partner in the concern, and resided there during the remainder of his life. He inherited some patrimonial property, his father having died when he was young; but, at the same time, he found it necessary to pursue his engagements in business, and was esteemed an upright tradesman, of kind and respectful manners; one who was careful, in all things, to act as becomes a member of our religious society. He continued in trade until within a few years of his decease; and though diligent in attending to these, the necessary cares of life, he was not engrossed with them: posses-

sing a well-regulated and pious mind, he may be said to have pursued the concerns of time with eternity steadily in view.

In the year 1786, he married Isabel Weatherald, of Wensleydale, in the north-western parts of Yorkshire, who has survived him; and in their union, for nearly forty years, which was a source of mutual comfort and happiness, he proved himself a truly-affectionate husband; uniformly evincing, under every circumstance, the greatest tenderness and sympathy.

The subject of this memoir, was one who, from early life, was of a thoughtful turn of mind, and showed a strong attachment to the principles and testimonies of Friends. As he advanced in years, he submitted to the humbling, refining operations of divine grace; and, through continued watchfulness and obedience to the pointings of duty, he attained to that experience and stability in the truth, of which his conduct and religious usefulness afterwards gave abundant proof. A description of some parts of his religious character, is appropriately given in the following extracts, from a memorial concerning him, issued by the Friends of Thaxted monthly meeting, of which he was a member.

"It is not our intention to extol the character of the deceased, as a man, estimable as he was, in the various relations of life; but to exhibit his Christian virtues, and ascribe, as he did, all excellency to the power of divine grace, mercifully granted to mankind, for their salvation, through the mediation of the blessed Redeemer, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The rectitude of his conduct, in the discharge of his moral and religious duties, his humility, meekness, and dedication to the cause of truth, were all fruits of faith in the means thus graciously afforded.

"He was very exemplary in the fulfilment of his duty to his Maker, by a constant attendance of religious meetings, when of ability; in which his solid deport-

ment indicated great reverence of spirit, and fervency of desire to gain access to the Fountain of all Good; and, on these occasions, we believe that his mind was often enriched with the incomes of divine love and peace.

"He was a great lover of retirement and meditation. The frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures was also a source of instruction and comfort to him; and this practice he was often tenderly engaged to recommend to others, as one of the means by which they might be strengthened and encouraged to advance in the Christian path.

"The views he took of himself were humble, whilst his estimate of the true Christian character was a highly exalted one. Hence arose great vigilance and circumspection, that no part of his demeanor should dishonour the cause he so greatly valued and loved. This care was manifested in all his conduct; and evidently so, in transacting the affairs of the church, in which his judgment was clear, and his language persuasive; tending much to encourage friends in the support of the discipline, in the executive part of which he very rarely excused himself from service; having a great care for the prosperity of truth, and that his fellow-professors might be faithful in our testimonies, and consistent in all their conduct, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

"Perhaps few have been so much favoured with the prevalence of love: it seemed to be the constant clothing of his mind, and was evinced towards all classes of society. The youth, especially, were the objects of his tender solicitude; for whose early attention to the reproofs of instruction, and for their growth and establishment in the Truth, he felt an unremitting concern."

His important services in our Yearly Meeting, and his communications to his friends, will be long remem-

bered. He often spoke of the comfort which he derived from reflecting on the goodness, and mercy, and loving-kindness of our Heavenly Father; inviting others, and particularly his younger friends, to seek to live under the influence of his love. His remarks were clear, comprehensive, and concise; and the precious influence which they produced, was often, in a remarkable degree, to be felt, after the conclusion of them.

He was a willing labourer in the church of Christ—an elder worthy of double honour; doing what his hands found to do with a cheerful heart, as one serving a good and gracious Master, and thus forcibly recommending the principles he professed. Highly valuing the care which our Christian discipline provides, and manifesting a deep concern for its being rightly and impartially exercised, he at the same time discovered much caution and tenderness in cases of delinquency, cherishing feelings of love and compassion, when judging of the errors and weaknesses of others. He was very anxious that all the meetings, established for transacting the affairs of our society, should be held under the influence of Christian love, and in the fear of the Lord; being convinced that, were this the case, they would often be times of solid instruction.

Whilst he was a firm believer in the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit, he was diffident in speaking of his own experience; and though well persuaded that our religious principles lead to great spirituality, he was very cautious of judging others, or deciding for them. His desire was, that all might be drawn in love to seek after the guidance of that wisdom which cometh from above, and to see the beauty and excellency of the truth as it is in Jesus. Believing, as he did, that our predecessors had been called to uphold a pure and perfect standard of Christian doctrine, he was deeply solicitous that this might in no way be lowered by Friends of the present day; and they as individuals, and the Society as a body, might endeavour so to act,

as to bring others to see and to acknowledge the consistency of our profession with the gospel dispensation.

His general appearance was meek and grave, exhibiting a bright example of a religious character; an habitual gratitude, and filial fear of God, marking his life and demeanor. He behaved with great kindness and courtesy to all; at the same time maintaining the dignity of a disciple of Christ, so that his deportment commanded esteem and deference.

Our dear and honoured friend was particularly pleased with the society of young persons; and to many of this class he was endeared by the sweetness and affability of his manners, conversing with them in a way which secured their confidence and esteem. He felt tender solicitude for them, in thinking of the temptations to which they were peculiarly exposed; and whether any hints which he offered to these, were designed to encourage them to persevere in the right way of the Lord, or to check the early appearance of a departure from Christian simplicity, they were expressed with so much love, that they found a ready entrance into the heart. Highly valuing the approved writings of our Society, he often recommended them to the attention of those in early life. He promoted also their perusal of works of literature and useful information; but saw a danger in the young and inexperienced entering much into the religious opinions of others. Yet he was far from being illiberal in his views, often gratefully acknowledging his belief, that sects and distinctions are lost in the divine sight.

William Grover appeared to think unkindly of no one; but, when obliged to censure the conduct of any, he did it with great feeling and compassion. At the same time, there was a quick perception of what was wrong, and it was not allowed to pass unreproved. He had a strong objection to hearing the absent slightly spoken of, or their faults made the topic of conversation. On these occasions he would observe silence, or

remind the company to be careful in their remarks on others, lest they should unguardedly injure the character of their friends; being himself careful not to make comparisons. He was of a cheerful, contented disposition, and considered it right to derive pleasure and gratification from temporal things, as blessings from the hand of an Almighty Benefactor; provided they were kept in subordination to the great purpose of life, and not suffered to engross too much of the time and affections. He met the vicissitudes of life with calmness, and was careful not to suffer cross occurrences to discompose his mind, or to draw him into the use of impatient expressions.

The remembrance of his absent friends was frequent and lively, and he evinced a warm affection for those whom he had loved and esteemed in his youth. He seldom forgot the afflicted, whether rich or poor. To those of the latter class he was kind and considerate, relieving their wants, often visiting them in their dwellings, when he would enter into conversation in a way adapted to them, and peculiar to himself; and frequently, in the retired circle of his own family, would speak of and commiserate the condition of those who had received fewer blessings than himself, or who had had a greater portion of affliction or suffering.

He was a man of great punctuality and order in the daily transactions of life, seldom deferring until the morrow the work of the day; steady and diligent in what he undertook, and a good economist of time. Few were aware of the extent of his usefulness in cases of a private nature, among his neighbours. To these he was free of access on all occasions; and much of his time was employed in their service. Possessing an intelligent mind and a clear judgment, he was often consulted; and his assistance was frequently solicited to settle little differences. He entered into such cases with great deliberation; his decisions were not hastily formed, and they were mostly well received.

When the Auxiliary Bible Society was formed in that part of the county of Essex in which he resided, he readily united in the support of it, and took an active part in investigating the want of the Scriptures among his poorer neighbours. He was a diligent member of the committee until the time of his illness, and felt a lively interest in the circulation of the Scriptures both at home and abroad. At the same time, he was anxious that the concerns of this society might be conducted under the influence of those feelings, and in that temper of mind, to which the Sacred Writings bear testimony; and, whilst believing, as he did, in the divine authority of Holy Scripture, he was very desirous that these records should be properly designated, and that men should not confound the possession and distribution of the Bible, and the mere knowledge of its contents, with the partaking of those living waters which flow immediately from Christ, the fountain of life—of that bread which cometh down from heaven, and which, when received with a lively, operative faith, enables us to work out the salvation of the soul with fear and trembling.

His friends had ample evidence of his being a firm believer in the essential doctrines of the Gospel. In a memorandum left behind him, he says; "I believe it is consistent with the genuine principles of Friends, that all the communications of the mercy, love, power, and goodness of God to his creature man, are in, by, and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and no otherwise, and in this belief I am thankful to live and unite."

In a letter, written in the eleventh month, 1823, after alluding, in terms of strong disapprobation, to the views of one whose sentiments were decidedly contrary to those of our society, "on a point of such supreme importance as the divine nature of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," he proceeds; "Can I close this subject better, than with the following quotation from a recently published pamphlet, in which the writer,

when speaking of Christ, says: 'What encouragement and comfort is there in the contemplation of his character and offices, both as prophetically indicated, and evangelically displayed, from the first and most obscure, to the last and most comprehensive and expressive: *viz.* The Bruiser of the Serpent's head; Immanuel, God with us; the Lord our righteousness; the Child born; the Son given, upon whose shoulders the government of his people is for ever to be; whose name should be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; the root and the offspring of David; the bright and morning Star; the Son of Man; the Son and Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world! who hath loved us, and washed us in his blood."*

William Grover possessed a sound constitution, and enjoyed remarkably good health, until within a few months of his death. On the 16th of 5th month, 1825, he left home early in the morning, to attend the Yearly Meeting, from which he had been very seldom absent for nearly forty years. He arrived in London in time for the first sitting of the meeting of ministers and elders, and acted as an assistant to the clerk; an office which he had for some time acceptably filled, and which he resigned at the close of that sitting. With his accustomed alacrity and interest in the concerns of the society, he entered, throughout the day, into the proceedings of the meeting. Towards the evening he felt unwell, and, in the course of the night was so alarmingly ill, that his wife was sent for early the following morning. His disorder was a very painful one; and, for several days, his life was considered to be in great danger. His medical attendants attributed his restoration to health, so far as it took place, to the serenity and humble resignation with which he bore his suffer-

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* Mary Jesup's Address to Friends.

ings, as much as to the means which were employed.

The following memorandum, written in London, on the occasion of this illness, was found among his papers.

"This has been a remarkable visitation, such an one as I never knew; except that of the small pox, more than forty years ago, may be at all compared with it. I might be said to be attacked very unexpectedly, and in a lonely condition; but help and comfort, as to outward accommodation, sprang up remarkably; and I think it might be said, that every requisite was supplied. As to the most important part, it seemed to have a great effect in breaking the mind off from this world, and exciting earnest desires for a preparation and fitness to enter into rest and peace everlasting.

"One feature was very striking: the kind, affectionate interest of Friends respecting me and my case, was indeed beyond what it would seem proper to record. But, at the same time, perhaps at scarce any period have I so feelingly and clearly seen my own unworthiness and insignificance, or so feelingly prized a state of littleness and humble reduction; so that, like a little babe, I might be permitted, in simplicity and perfect innocence, to draw nourishment in quietness from the breast of ever enduring and inexhaustible consolation."

In a letter to two of his intimate friends, he remarks;

"I am desirous (I hope with a degree of humble gratitude) of informing you, that, within three or four days, considerable improvement in my health has taken place; and, whilst I am so abundantly sensible, from recent past experience, of the uncertainty of the things of time, yet I wish duly to appreciate this rich favour, permitted to a poor traveller through the chequered vale of time."

Towards the end of the sixth month, he so far reco-

vered, as to be able to return home, on which occasion he made the following memorandum.

1825.—7 *mo.* 13. "Being permitted, on the 30th ult. in company with my dear wife, cousin Elizabeth Glaisyer, and John Hooper, to reach home in safety, I am aware it is my duty, not only as a child, to crave divine consolation, but also to watch the openings and presentations of duty which may be vouchsafed, however small; so that the talent entrusted may not be buried under the feelings of feebleness, or any thing else."

In two letters to his friends, not long afterwards, he thus alludes to his illness:

1825.—8 *mo.* 7. "We can see but little before us; and what a favour it is, when circumstances arise, to be enabled to meet them with prudence and peaceful resignation. This illness may be said to be a proof that we are not our own keepers, but poor, dependent creatures. Oh! that we may have light in our dwelling and on our path; and, through boundless mercy, peace within our borders."

8 *mo.* 26. "Respecting resignation, how just are thy remarks, that our wishes as well as our works should at all times harmonize with the divine will: indeed, our study should be, to be circumscribed thereby; but this is no light matter, but a high and most precious attainment. Do not thy remarks, however, beg two most interesting questions; namely, 'the day's work accomplished, and the expected consequent reward?' also, 'the time arrived for dissolving every tender, earthly tie?' With awfulness and reverence these may be left in the holy, dispensing hand of Him who doeth all things well; whilst we, in grateful, humble, sensibility of the value of the present precious blessings, manifest our due estimation of them, by neglecting no proper means to secure their continuance, in due and filial submission, all the while, to his infinite wisdom, goodness, and mercy."

As the health of William Grover improved a little after his return home, his friends cherished the pleasing hope that his valuable life would be lengthened, and that they should be permitted longer to partake of the instruction to be derived from his bright example and Christian counsel. But He who ordereth all in perfect wisdom, and who will graciously supply the spiritual need of those who look in faith unto Him, saw meet to terminate the trials of this his faithful servant, and to admit him, as there is every reason to believe, to the participation of that peace and joy which are reserved for the righteous in the life which is to come.

"The expressions of a religious nature, that our late dear friend uttered towards the close of life, were not numerous; but they all partook of that humble, yet confiding and peaceful character, that distinguished him when in health, and bespoke a mind looking towards heaven, of which, he said, he had 'had a pleasant view, particularly of late;' and that he was 'favoured to feel very little condemnation.' At different times he thus expressed himself: 'The prevailing desire of my mind has been, for many years, that I might close in peace. I have had many blessings, many temptations, and many trials in my time; but have been mercifully helped through them.' At one time, evidently under great tenderness of spirit, he observed, 'The shadow of divine mercy is very broad;' and at another, when conversing about his illness, he said, 'It is a source of great consolation to know, that He who formed us is near.'

"In the afternoon of the day preceding his decease, he expressed himself to the following effect: 'There is nothing so precious, whether in youth or in age, sickness or health, as a sense of the divine presence and love. I have had great cause thankfully to believe, that the protecting arm of kind Providence has been with me all my life long, from my youth up;' and, after a pause, added, 'It is my greatest desire that my sun, which now seems nearly set, may go down in brightness,

without a cloud; relying only upon the goodness of the Almighty, who can change a life of suffering for one of comfort and endless happiness—who can make a death-bed as a bed of roses. Yea, I bless thy holy name, thy presence and love can make a death bed as a bed of roses.' Afterwards he said, in nearly these words; 'My life seems fast closing, and my afflictions nearly at an end. I have been greatly afflicted, [alluding probably to his illness,] but doubt not that it has been in unspeakable, unerring wisdom, that I have been thrown, again and again, into the furnace; which is, no doubt, designed for my further refinement. Oh! may all the purposes of the Almighty be fulfilled. Oh! what a precious state is that, where nothing is wanted but the celestial gate to be opened. All praise I ascribe unto the Lord's holy name.' "*

He was enabled to bear, with great patience and Christian fortitude, the extreme sufferings which he endured within a short time of his death; but, for a few hours before the close, he was mercifully relieved from all pain, and his end was remarkably peaceful. He died the 11th of the 10th month, 1825, in the seventy-third year of his age.

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* See the Memorial of Thaxted Monthly Meeting.

CHAP. II.

MEDITATIONS AND REFLECTIONS.

1783.—4 *mo.* 27. How different a character is he who is fond of procrastinating and delaying, from him, who, with a wise regard to the uncertainty of to-morrow, nobly improves each opportunity whilst he has it.

1783.—10 *mo.* 15. From disobedience and difficulty, surely I am a dwarf, by not coming rightly forward to the duty of the day. How main a thing, through all, is an attention to the conclusion. Do not some of us labour and toil ourselves, to do *that* from fear, which those who are in the life of goodness do from love?

1784.—10 *mo.* 13. Oh that none in ease and plenty may contribute, improperly, to make it difficult for those in less favoured circumstances to think of the Author of their being with gratitude and love.

1790.—5 *mo.* 11. "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light." It appears a precious thing rightly to believe in the light, and to follow it: treading in the just man's path, which is said to be "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." It is probable that many under our name do not believe in this light, nor expect, through faithfulness to its discoveries, to be led on further and further to the knowledge of the will of God, and to an establishment in his peaceable kingdom, even whilst in this life: not being like minded with a remnant who believe that his kingdom *is* come; and who desire, according to ability, to be pressing into it, that they may be faithful subjects of it, and that the government may be on the shoulders of Him whom they desire to serve.

8 *mo.* 17. It is a fine thing to be preserved from every snare. I believe we may be so engaged in things which bear the appearance of being lawful, and even necessary and incumbent, as to be disqualified from possessing that tender, childlike, attentive state of mind, which appears so necessary to our growth in a divine life, and to a true filial obedience, in all things, to the will of our Heavenly Father.

1792.—4 *mo.* 12. Oh! for a sincere love and attachment to that pure and undefiled religion, which stands in a filial devotedness of heart to do the Lord's will, and in a reverent, holy travail of soul, to be made truly acquainted with what his will is; that so we may not be deceived, under an apprehension that we are fulfilling the divine will, when we are rather frustrating it by doing our own. This, I believe, may be the case, even in things which may have a good-like appearance.

1799.—6 *mo.* 13. I believe it is good for young men to make a point of devoting a small portion, at least, of every day, to read a little in the Bible, and endeavour after a little calm and quiet in their minds. Something may be presented to the minds in these short seasons of inward calm, which may a little nourish and cherish the divine life in the soul, and make room for the love of God to prevail a little; and so, as this love is cherished and found to grow, the love of the world, and earnest desire after it, will lessen, and the soul be prepared to take its chief delight in something spiritual and heavenly.

1799.—6 *mo.* 22. I feel low, under a sense of my want of the necessary qualification for active service in the church. Oh! that there may be more of a waiting for the putting forth; and a deeper and more frequently-renewed travail after dwelling in the pure life of religion, and after inward communion with the Lord; —to know his will, and receive ability, in the abase-

ment and abnegation of self, to do it to his glory, and my own soul's true peace.

1801.—9 *mo.* 14. Oh! that we may be made what the Lord would have us to be; that is, in harmony with his work in the earth; standing faithful, according to the present day's administration and service, as many of our worthy predecessors stood faithful in their day and time. The great thing is, *to be found in our lot*, let the state of Truth's cause be whatsoever it may in the world.

I think I see a great danger in Friends getting into easy circumstances: it renders them not so strong, and able to endure hardness as good soldiers. I believe *all we have* must be at the divine disposal, and so felt by us, before we can be fully qualified to endure all things that may be required of a disciple of Christ, in filling up his lot in the militant church.

1810.—8 *mo.* 8. I find a great proneness in the mind to be, every now and then, laying hold of something wherein to expect a sort of permanency of satisfaction, if not of delight; but I doubt my capacity to do this, and yet retain a due readiness sincerely to say, "Thy will be done," should these things be called for. When we use the words, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," surely we mean to be sincere; but what submission and devotion of heart and will, does this imply: no obstruction or resistance to the divine will "as in heaven."

11 *mo.* 8. I believe we came into this world for the great and momentous purpose of being eternally happy. Even the present life, which is a mixed and a probationary state, is replete with numberless blessings, and precious enjoyments, along with the attendant trials. And our duty and highest interest is, so to encounter the trials incident to this present existence, and so to participate of the comforts and mercies afforded, as that our minds may be capable to bless the Lord for

his goodness, in giving us a being, and preserving us; and to meet the end with resignation and peace.

11 *mo.* 10. The true dignity of man—of a Christian—consists in endeavouring to fill up his duty, in the station which he is permitted to fill in this world. There are few, if any situations, in which a man who is upright may not shine. There is lustre in integrity; and the peace which Christ gives to his humble, dependent children, can reach the humble cottager, as well as the inhabitant of the mansion. Many, by having their eye out after things not within their reach, nor within their sphere, neglect or overlook surrounding and intended blessings; and so are not thankful, as they might be. Thankfulness for mercies received is a very precious feeling, and gives a sweet relish to what we enjoy. Let us, therefore, in the first place, be sensible and feel what we are, and diligently occupy and improve our talents and gifts in the fear of the Lord; and desire, above all things, to be kept within the reach of his blessing; so shall the increase, if permitted, be enjoyed without violating the peace of our minds.

1811.—4 *mo.* 28. A precious sentiment it is, "that the spirit of benevolence, if cherished and encouraged, sends forth fresh shoots." The soul is enriched by an increase of benevolence, although the means of gratifying or exercising it, to an extent adequate to our feelings, may not be within our power.

1812.—1 *mo.* 25. It is a precious thing to have a belief and feeling produced in our minds, that we are under the divine gracious care and protection. Perhaps I have not sustained more loss, or religious disadvantage, any way, than I have for want of more diligently minding the *very* gentle intimations or calls to inward stillness. A feeling of a connexion with the Fountain of Good is, above all things, to be prized; and this feeling is utterly out of our control or command, and consequently to be accepted with reverence

and cheerfulness, whenever vouchsafed. We cannot prize it too much: it is a treasure in prosperity: it is a treasure in adversity; it will be emphatically a treasure, when the awful moments arrive for us to bid an eternal farewell to the things of time and sense.

8 *mo.* 22. We are, indeed, fearfully and wonderfully made. From the nature of our present condition, we see things very differently at different times; perhaps, in part, occasioned by our attempting to see and judge when we are not in a situation for it.

10 *mo.* 24. Having now, except about three weeks, completed my sixtieth year, I may say, that in turning over some of the leaves of my past life, I may record occasions of reverent and humble thankfulness, for having been permitted to escape with as little of wounds and bruises as I have; and for the extension of divine goodness and mercy towards me, many ways. And I think my religious experience, if I may call any thing which I have known by that name, has been much found in the path of faith, rather than of sight. Just enough vouchsafed to preserve me a believer in the path, and in the power which sustains in it. Perhaps this has been the manner in which I have been led along, because it was best for me, as most calculated to keep me humble; often having nothing good, nor knowing how to come at any good; but at times sweetly refreshed with calmness and serenity, rather than with the spirit of warm devotion, or any thing like exstacy or rapture.

1813.—1 *mo.* 22. The great thing appears to be, to have the right hunger and thirst after righteousness excited and preserved, or maintained, in the mind; then things which are of an earthly, transitory, or unsatisfying nature, will be *trials*, as they prevent a participation of the blessed fruits of this righteousness. Many are resting in these outward enjoyments, as if they were the *end* of our being; but the true Christian, the true believer, is permitted to enjoy abundance of bles-

sings, without resting in them, and so has the comfort of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

1814.—3 *mo.* 24. To write of the immediate and particular influences of the Spirit of Truth upon the mind, in the way we understand and believe that subject, is a very delicate business, especially when an application is made to particular and striking instances; because it may often happen that there is really not a capacity in the persons addressed, to receive what is advanced. Whether the doctrine of clear, immediate revelation, in the present day, be truth and reality, as we most surely believe, or not, it must be granted to be possible that it may be so; that is, that it may be truth.

1814.—4 *mo.* 1. How many ways to involve the mind in a continual something that seems plausible; and so not keep it just in readiness to hear the call, to hearken to the voice, or yield to the gentle, inclining influence of divine love; an influence often so soft and silent, as to be very, very easily put by, quashed, lost, forgotten.

1815.—11 *mo.* 2. The occurrence of a great variety of things to engage the attention, on our own and other people's account, seems to fill up much of the time, which is passing over, *never to return*, that I have great occasion to be careful to give the preference to those things, if I can happily distinguish them, which are of the most importance; because the remaining sands in the glass are spending very fast, and, most probably, in a few years, at the longest, there will be none remaining. Whilst we are conflicting with the various infirmities of our nature, it is a precious thing, to those who are favoured, under all, and through all, to grow in religious experience; not casting away the shield, either in the day, or in the night season: but in humble trust and dependence on divine support, pressing forward, holding fast the profession of their faith, not easily blown about by floating opinions, but watch-

ing for the manifestation of that light, and of that calming influence which satisfies the soul, and gives ability to rejoice, amidst the jeopardies of an earthly pilgrimage.

1817.—6 *mo.* When individuals, through disobedience or unfaithfulness, have been brought into grievous perplexity and embarrassment, it often happens, that, in condescending goodness towards his poor creatures, our Almighty Father does not will their continuance in this wilderness condition, but is graciously disposed to bring them out of it. But then, if we would come forth perfect, his own all-wise process must be submitted to with patience and resignation. Whatever the provings and the humiliation required, we may rest satisfied that they are necessary to effect the purpose intended; and if we are at length brought through so as to stand in a state of acceptance before Him, and to partake of the peace which He gives, we shall not have to say, we have suffered more for the attainment of the prize, than it is found to be worth. Oh! the unspeakable value, to the exercised mind, of patience and resignation.

1818.—4 *mo.* 27. ——— conversing this morning on the politics of Europe, concluded with this beautiful sentiment: "that there is nothing substantial and satisfactory but the *Supreme Good;* in it, the deeper we go, and the more largely we drink, the better and happier we are; whereas, in outward acquirements, if we could attain to the summit and perfection of them, the very possession and enjoyment palls."

1818.—9 *mo.* 6. Oh! the inestimable favour it is, to be true believers, and thereby to be made, from time to time, partakers of the [spiritual] bread which is broken, and the wine which is in mercy handed to sustain, to animate, to enliven the soul.

1819.—6 *mo.* 15. Oh! for some share of inheritance, or fellowship, with those whom the Lord delighteth to bless.

1821.—1 *mo.* 5. Many are the favours which the tried and exercised servants of the Lord have to commemorate, in the course of their devotion to his cause. May we all, in our various allotments, endeavour to be more and more preserved in a state of watchful dependence upon Him: that so, whether at home or abroad, our experience of his goodness, mercy, and truth, may be enlarged and confirmed, to our own consolation and encouragement of others.

1821.—5 *mo.* 20. The Yearly Meeting was largely attended, and was a solid, instructive, and interesting season. As a religious society, we have much indeed to be thankful for; and I do hope there is much to be encouraged about, as to the state of things among us, although much to lament. Perhaps few things more to be lamented, than that many of us are not enough convinced, that there is no advancing in true Christian experience, and inheriting the riches, and privileges, and consolations of the gospel of Christ, without submitting to his yoke, and bearing his cross.

1822.—9 *mo.* 8. Reverently do I wish to acknowledge the belief, that there is that which can richly make amends for every privation, heal every breach, cause the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. But, oh! for an increase of capacity to look unto this, and to walk worthy of receiving such blessing.

1823.—2 *mo.* 23. It is a great privilege, in affliction, to be near tender, sympathizing friends; particularly, may I not say, at our time of life, when both bodily and mental energy may be considered on the decline. And oh! that, in all our trials, both inward and outward, the divine arm of everlasting loving-kindness and compassion may be underneath, to bear up and sustain, and afford us a safe landing at last, beyond the reach of all conflict and all fear.

1823.—7 *mo.* 21. We require some one to speak to freely, and also confidentially. And besides, how

greatly is human comfort, at times increased, by a reciprocity of innocent communication. I believe it relieves the more weighty, and, sometimes, over-anxious cogitations of the mind; and, by so relieving, contributes to our resuming them with more effect and advantage.

1824.—3 *mo.* 7. How much I desire that nothing, amidst all the ups and downs that occur, may be permitted to prevent us from seeking after the love and favour, the support and protection of our Heavenly Father. I think I scarcely ever found and felt it more needful for myself, than now of late time.

> Give what Thou wilt, without Thee we are poor,
> And with Thee, rich, take what Thou wilt away.

1823.—10 *mo.* 12. How earnestly to be desired is a complete redemption from all selfishness: then would envy, pride, and wrath, no more torment the poor mind.

1824.—4 *mo.* May I, with reverence and humility, say, that I believe there is nothing to separate the redeemed soul from the spirit of the blessed Redeemer; and that, where He is, there will also his servants be. He that is in Christ is a new creature; and being, through redeeming love and mercy, brought into Him, and continuing in Him, who is the resurrection and the life, such shall never die, but remain in Him for ever and evermore.

1824.—8 *mo.* 1. It is a great comfort, when past seventy, to be pretty well; so as to enjoy the bounty of kind Providence, and endeavour to improve the further portion of time allotted; so that we may, through mercy, be ready for the final, awful change, when it comes.

1824.—12 *mo.* 8. How unspeakably worthy our love, our allegiance, our seeking after, and our more frequent communion, is the Spirit of Truth. How ought it to be [sought after] from day to day, and through the day, so as to raise and bear up our minds

above the things of time, even whilst we are necessarily engaged in them; seeing they are all very uncertain, and we may be taken from them, or they from us, very unexpectedly. In such case, to have our minds previously well acquainted with divine love, and, as it were, enwrapped with it—what a treasure!

1825.—3 *mo.* What a fine thing it is to be preserved in the humility, simplicity, and stability which Truth gives to its sincere and devoted disciples. Oh! for a more general, deep acquaintance with the value of true quiet, where the thirst for change and novelty is not felt; but a sincere waiting and desire is known, after that which is not of man, nor of the strength and abilities of man, but of the Lord. Here, I believe, the creature will be kept low, diffident, and fearful of itself; and more ready and desirous to be taught and instructed, than to fancy itself qualified to instruct others.

—— The creation of the world and of man was, and is, a marvellous display of the divine glory; and the highest dignity and happiness of man, is to live, in unison with this effect of the divine will and purpose, that we may not miss of intended good and enjoyment, which it seems are only to be this way come at. Our Heavenly Father wants nothing. He is perfect; his glory is perfect; and this or that act are only a display of such part of his glory, as his infinite wisdom thinks meet, and for the best, at any particular period, or on any particular occasion.

—— The expression of beautiful sentiments, and the reading and approving of them, afford a delight to the mind; but do not always deepen us in religious sensibility, or increase our love for the simplicity of the Truth as it is in Jesus, or advance us in the consequent knowledge and experience of heavenly good. In contemplating this subject, I have remembered the import of a few expressions of an eminent minister: "We love the splendid, pleasant picture; but this is an easy pur-

chase, in comparison of the deep-hid, inestimable pearl of substantial truth."

—— This morning I have a somewhat luminous view of the nature and preciousness of the gospel ministry, and other rightly-religious exercises. God is the inexhaustible fountain of all good: there is no goodness but what comes from Him; consequently, nothing for poor human nature to plume itself upon. This divine power goes forth in such manner, time, and degree, as is consistent with its own infinite wisdom and goodness; in displays of beneficence, mercy, and blessing to its creatures: sometimes in immediate communications of light, life, and divine virtue and sweetness to the souls of individuals, for their own advancement in the path of salvation; and sometimes in precious gifts of qualification, for the benefit of others, the edification of the church, and for other religious services.

—— To have a mind preserved in such a state as to be susceptible of the impression of heavenly good, I esteem of primary and vital importance. To those who desire to witness the fulness of gospel privilege and blessing, this is very essential; seeing that there are seasons in which such a sweetness and precious solemnity are to be witnessed, as is comparable, in degree, to heaven upon earth; as well as that it is our Christian duty to lead others, by our example and influence, to the same enjoyment.

—— By how many and how various means do we get broken down, and gradually prepared for our eternal separation from this frail and uncertain state of being; and how exceedingly is it to be desired that we may all so improve the time of health and bodily ability, as that, when sickness, pain, and affliction are measured out to us, we may be favoured with that sweetness and peace which bear up the mind above the waves, and enable us to say, the rod as well as the staff of the Lord's goodness, are our comfort and our rejoicing.

—— Convince me, more and more, O Lord! I beseech thee, that thy time is the only time for true refreshment and comfort to the poor soul; and that every visitation of thy love and life is exceedingly precious, and not to be trifled with or passed by, as to a more convenient season of mine.

Grant, I pray thee, that the chief study of my life may be to be found in a state of readiness to receive, adopt, and yield to every of thy gracious offers of love and life; that so my poor soul may indeed have a share in the spiritual kingdom of Thee, the living and true God, even in this life; and so come increasingly to know that Thou art the only true riches, and that every thing else is fleeting and uncertain.

Remove, I pray thee, by the gentle showers of thy celestial rain, the hardness of my heart, and make it very susceptible of the impressions of thy Holy Spirit; that I may be indeed thy servant, and that Thou mayst delight to bless me, and increase my knowledge and experience in thy precious truth, and in Thyself, the only and enduring treasure of the soul.

—— Oh adorable Goodness, Wisdom, and Power! preserve me so, I pray Thee, that nothing may deprive me of the capacity to enjoy Thee, according to the manner and degree in which it may please Thee, in thy mercy, to make thyself known to thy poor, unworthy, but depending creature, in time and to all eternity.

CHAP. III.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS AND OTHER PAPERS RELATING TO THE CHARACTER AND PRINCIPLES OF OUR RELIGIOUS SOCIETY.

—

Some Remarks on the Religious Principles of the People called Quakers, as to Wars and Fightings.

It becomes those who profess faith towards God, and who, in obedience to what they believe to be their religious duty, differ in some things from other professors, to be willing, in meekness and fear, to render a reason for that difference. And as there may be many who have not been fully informed of the grounds on which the people called Quakers, ever since they were a people, have borne a testimony against Wars and Fightings, it may be acceptable to some serious inquirers, to know a little what those grounds are.

1st. They believe that the happiness of mankind, in an especial manner, depends upon their living in the fear of God; walking in obedience to the secret manifestations of Truth, through that divine principle of light and grace given to every man to profit with; forsaking every thing which this divine principle manifests to be evil; and following after every thing which it manifests to be righteous, holy, and acceptable to God our Creator, our beneficent Preserver, and final Judge.

2nd. They believe that the Christian religion is a religion of universal love; and that, as the minds of men are, through divine assistance, gathered into this love, they become qualified to fulfil that injunction of Christ Jesus, the author of the Christian religion; "Love your

enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you." They believe that this truly noble and happy state of mind is not attainable in our own will and time; but that, as mankind yield to the secret influences of that divine principle of light and grace in the heart, alluded to, they are favoured, more and more, to gain an ascendency over self-love, and to witness an enlargement of heart, so as to desire the good of all, and that all may be brought to partake of that happiness which results from the favour and blessing of Almighty God.

3rd. They believe, that as this divine love has full place in the minds of any people, the understanding becomes enlightened, so as clearly to see that all contention is out of the Truth, and out of the way of substantial happiness. And a desire accompanies these, that no part of their conduct may contribute to discord in any shape, either between families, between neighbours, or between nations; but being made sensible that all contention is evil, and that the continuance thereof interrupts the comfort of mankind, they desire to be preserved from doing any thing to keep it alive; and, consequently, to manifest by their conduct, that they believe it more consistent for the professed followers of Christ to take no active part in war; because war brings grievous calamity upon the earth, destroys the lives of our fellow-creatures, and tends to cherish that spirit of animosity and confusion which is inconsistent with the gospel of peace.

4th. They believe that passage of the Sacred Writings to be particularly encouraging to those who profess faith in God, and in his divine providence and protection: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever;" and that the strongest bulwark to any nation, is the favour and protection of Him, who can save with equal ease in times of great perplexity, as in seasons of less outward difficulty.

5th. They believe that the way to obtain this favour and protection, is to walk faithfully before Him; reverently depending upon Him, and in all things desiring that his will may be the rule and government of our lives. And they believe that, for a nation so walking and so depending, there is greater safety in this trust in the divine arm of power, than in the strength of armies; and that it is beautifully consistent for those in any nation who are thus convinced and thus believing, to endeavour, in humility and reverence, to cast their care upon Him, desiring to be resigned to every dispensation of his providence; and that, whatever happens, they may be found clear in his sight of having contributed to the distress, the unspeakable distress and bloodshed of their fellow-creatures.

Extracts from Letters, &c.

1815.—12 *mo.* 29. I am not aware that Friends, as a Society, rate too highly the ground on which they are called to stand; although unhappily, too many of us do not maintain our standing. And I think we may safely believe this, without ascribing any thing to the creature, or magnifying the people; but reverently acquiescing with and acknowledging the Power whence the gifts and ability proceed.

If, by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, our predecessors were brought forth from amidst the different denominations of professors, and enabled to bear faithful and undeviating testimony to the spirituality of the gospel—to the necessity of following the Captain of salvation, whithersoever He is pleased to lead by his light and truth manifested in the secret of the soul; in other words, in the path of self-denial and the daily cross—to the necessity of avoiding all conformity with formality, all unrighteous conformity to the

maxims, policy, fashions, and friendships of the world —to hold up a standard against wars and against oaths, and a testimony to the freedom of gospel-ministry, and to that worship which, laying aside all rites and ceremonies, as constituted and proper appendages to the gospel dispensation, is performed in spirit and in truth: —If they have been brought to the blessed and glorious avowal, "That in pure, silent worship, we dwell under the holy Anointing, and feel Christ to be our Shepherd; that here the best of Teachers ministers to the several conditions of his flock, and the soul receives, immediately from the divine Fountain, that with which it is nourished:"—If this people have been brought thus far, surely it becomes the living among them, in the depth of humility, reverence, and fear, to say, as a collective body, "He that is mighty hath done for us great things, and holy is his name;"—has placed us in the midst of many mercies, in a state of awful responsibility. Are we not brought to the acknowledgment, that "the opening of an inward, silent worship in this nation, is a precious opening;" and that it is our duty to walk answerably to the nature of an inward communion with God, that so no stumbling-block, through us, may be laid in the way of others? The awfulness of the responsibility does not annul the truth of it; and I believe it is unsafe to flinch from or deny it.

I rejoice greatly in the spread of the Holy Scriptures, and in the institution of the British and Foreign Bible Society, as a present, highly favoured means of this spread. I am concerned, by word and example, to encourage Bible-meetings; and I think am never so comfortable, if I am prevented attending those to which, as appertaining to our district, I may be said to belong; I mean, our quarterly committees and our anniversary at Saffron Walden. But I see great cause, indeed, for Friends to be very watchful on such occasions. How conspicuous seems to be the fondness to give applause, if not to receive it; to say nothing of so

liberally ascribing to the Bible, that which can rightly be ascribed only to the Divine Spirit. How humble, how deep in travail, then, had Friends need be, that they may be enabled to keep their ground—to support, yea, exalt their testimony to the necessity of help and strength from the Lord, for the advancement of his own cause. I believe they may be greatly useful in such assemblies, and, by the savour of their spirits, tend at times, more or less, to season others. But how great is the danger, lest, instead of communicating strength to others, we lose, in degree, our hold of the steadfastness and beauty of the pure and unchangeable Truth.

I believe, in a meeting for discipline, rightly gathered and rightly preserved, the united exercise of living members is, that Truth may prevail over all. To a meeting thus circumstanced, I believe at times, a very precious sensibility is vouchsafed, and Friends travel on in the simplicity of filial fear and reverence; and when a nomination is depending, Friends become, at times, constrained, at other times feel a tender, brotherly, sensible freedom, to mention a name, without daring to stamp it high; but, in resignation, leaving it to make its way, or otherwise, as the Master pleases; and leaving it with the meeting, whether the right savour attends the expression, and whether there may be a right capacity in the nominee, to accept or decline. Thus Friends feel one for another, and the bond of tender gospel affection is preserved; and the travail for the cause maintained, and its prosperity sought, beyond all other considerations. Oh! one can seem to conceive what a precious thing it is, when Friends, in their meetings for discipline, can rightly bow under the solemnizing influence; not stamping any thing they do, high; but fearing, in the least degree, to wound the precious cause, or contribute to disperse the precious solemnity, either by speaking or by withholding.

I speak not, very, very far from it, as one that has attained, but as a believer in the validity of these things: and in the favoured condition of rightly-gathered, and rightly-preserved meetings for discipline.

1817.—6 *mo.* Whether we be ministers, elders, overseers, or of whatever class, I believe we should mind where we are; and rather bear a burden, perhaps rightly brought upon us, from sympathy, or the operation and influence of the Spirit, than venture to relieve ourselves, when circumstances and the want of opportunity forbid. I believe, in a large meeting, a diversity of exercise may be excited in lively-spirited Friends, which it would be very inexpedient to bring forth in words. But I suppose that the weighty, deeply-attentive, patient mind, is permitted to discover the right time for moving; and then, the baptizing influence being dwelt under in the exercise of the gift, the meeting feels the precious effect. But I rather think, that some who have a gift in the ministry, miss it at times, in the exercise of it, for want of understanding, at the time, the state of the meeting; perhaps, partly, from being involved in their own exercise. When a meeting is baptized under a living ministry, and the minister sits down, it is a nice thing indeed to make an addition; at least, before a suitable space has been allowed. As the end of all true ministry is to bring the hearers to an abiding under the influence of the Spirit of Christ, we should rejoice when this is in any considerable degree produced by the ministry of any Friend; and be very careful not to step in, in a way to dissipate the solemnity, or remove the sense which has thus profitably been begotten. At the same time, it is very desirable that no rightly appointed offering should be prevented; and the diversity of states and conditions is to be remembered. So that it is indeed a mystery; and a very weighty thing is living, baptizing, ministry.

I remember, whilst on this subject, a remark of dear Henry Tuke, in our quarterly meeting, a pretty many years ago, that he thought hardly a greater evil could befall us, as a religious society, than an unbaptized ministry. As to offerings in the ministry, rendered unseasonable from the circumstance of a meeting being in measure baptized by previous ministry, I believe, solid, judicious elders might be greatly helpful to our dear ministering friends of less experience: they are much to be felt for, and so are meetings.

1821.—5 *mo.* 19. My mind so sincerely entertains the belief, that all good cometh from God, and therefore must be patiently and reverently waited for, that I can heartily join in desire, that, in our meetings for discipline, the creature may be kept humble, simple, and dependent; looking for the blessing on its feeble endeavours, unto Him who is the Alpha and Omega, the inexhaustible source both of strength and consolation. It behoves the rightly exercised, to be especially careful to keep their posts in such meetings; that nothing draw them off their guard, or betray them into movements unworthy of the faithful followers of the Lamb. The exercised frame of their spirits might be sweetly encouraging to younger, well-inclined Friends, and thus strength be progressively gained to the meeting. I am not sure whether it is possible, by words, to convince the gainsayers, if many such there be, that our meetings for discipline are divinely owned and crowned; but if those who know the Truth, and love it, would keep their ranks faithfully, with meekness and lowliness, yet in stability and gospel-beauty, it would, perhaps, go further than any thing else; and I believe these, rightly engaged, would be blessed in meetings, and meetings blessed in them.

I think, in meetings for discipline, made up of a great variety of states and conditions, it is a precious thing that we endeavour to gather into silence; and may we

not consider the solemnity which sometimes prevails, to be like a mantle cast over us, preparatory to entering on the business, and to proceeding in order, as the subjects successively rise before us; and perhaps, in the condescension of Him who knows the circumstances and state of every mind, it may be permitted, that there should be an entering into the concerns of the meeting, by many, or by most present, according to their present capacity, growth, and attainment. And in a degree of integrity and simplicity, without much religious experience in some, there may be a desire that the right thing may be promoted; and by these, a few words expressed, without offence or wound to the meeting.

1822.—11 *mo.* 17. May we not with reverence believe, when the Most High was pleased, in the going forth of his wisdom and of his mercy, to gather the religious society of which we have the unspeakable privilege of being members, that he proposed to bring them forth as a people, wholly separated from the apostasy, which had previously so overwhelmed the Christian world; giving, in a wonderful degree, light, and power to discern, exhibit, and faithfully testify against the spirit, and the fruits of that apostasy:—in other words, to call forth a people who should aim at perfection, in accordance with our blessed Saviour's injunction: "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect:"—who should aim at a state of perfect acceptance with Him; compromising nothing; abating nothing; but pressing on, through all discouragement and opposition, towards the mark for the prize —the blessed prize of unalloyed peace.

If this were the case, can we wonder that they were very quick of discernment, respecting any thing that came in their way, which was, either in root or in branch, appertaining to the apostasy? As they sought the glory of God, they were very zealous against what

they believed derogatory therefrom. As they loved the truth as it is in Jesus, they were grieved and offended at any thing which they thought militated against the purity and simplicity of it. The persecutions and trials which they met with, joined with the convictive evidence of Truth in their own minds, tended greatly to wean them from the world, and to fix their attention closely on promoting the glory of God; therein securing their own happiness, and conducing to the happiness of others in this life, and, finally, in that kingdom whereunto the robber and destroyer cannot come.

Can we, without tender emotion, contemplate what different conclusions will be produced respecting the same subjects, where, on one hand, a people are zealously, yet reverently and humbly, pursuing the glory of God, as the principal thing, or with an undivided aim; or where, on the other hand, the spirit, the maxims, and the enjoyments of the world, are claiming a very considerable proportion of the attention of the mind, and the strength of its faculties? In the former case, how nice, tender, and scrupulous, that nothing be admitted, trenching at all upon their allegiance to God, and their testimony against whatever has sprung from the apostasy, or militates against the spirit of the gospel of Christ; endeavouring to be faithful in every point, and being exceedingly jealous of whatever is either decidedly inconsistent with the purity of the Gospel, or that is of such a complexion. In the latter case, what nice distinctions are sought up, and found out; what subtle reasonings, tending to lessen suffering—to abate the distinction between the humble, devoted follower, and those who appear willing to run the hazard of that which may eventually distress, if not lay waste, the Society; keeping as near the world's maxims as they can, with tolerable satisfaction; and having, perhaps, the right eye towards it, and the left eye towards the kingdom everlasting.

CHAP. IV.

LETTERS AND OTHER PAPERS ADDRESSED TO THOSE IN EARLY LIFE.

—

Tender Counsel to the Young.

In looking towards the young men in our religious Society, and esteeming them a precious, and very interesting part of the body, I consider their preservation in the midst of the dangers of the world, a most worthy object of attention. I believe some of them, from circumstances which occur, are led, at an early age, into temptations and deviations, that eventually tend to their perplexity and distress; and that they, in many instances, lose a state of comparative innocence, before they are rightly aware of the value of themselves, and how much the sweetness and true enjoyment of life, are increased by humbly walking in the fear of God; not in slavish, but filial fear; for He is our gracious Father, and the fountain of all blessing.

I am inclined, in affectionate desire that they may not forfeit the substance of comfort, through a pursuit of the shadow, to recommend the following short hints:—

I believe it is good for young men, to make a point of devoting a small portion of time—a few moments—every day, to read a little in the Holy Scriptures, and to endeavour to yield their minds, in sincerity, into a short calm and quiet. For, in divine loving-kindness, something may be vouchsafed and communicated, in these short seasons of mental recollection, which will,

in degree, nourish and cherish the Divine Life in the soul, so that the Love of God will be felt to prevail a little; and as this love is entertained, and found to increase, the love of the world, and the anxious desire after its enjoyments, will lessen, and the mind be prepared to take its chief delight in something spiritual and heavenly. This experience will prove a permanent treasure.

Thoughts on Company and Books.

I wish to feel for young people, under the various temptations and trials to which the years of inexperience are exposed. They are naturally and reasonably inclined to learn, and to accomplish themselves in ornament and usefulness. To this end, as well as for temporary gratification, they value and prefer company and books. Most of them, perhaps, would say *good* company and *good* books; and it is a delicate and very interesting matter to determine in what degree to discourage, or to countenance this inclination. It is an unspeakable favour, however, early in life, to know, that, in the silence and retirement of the mind, there is instruction and comfort to be met with, beyond what can be expected, either from even good company, or good books. It is observable, by the attentive mind, that there may be an enjoyment of books and of company which strengthens us in the love, esteem, and pursuit of this silence and retirement; and there is an enjoyment of good books and good company, which weakens and enfeebles the mind, in its capacity to love, pursue, and enjoy this profitable silence and meditation. Here, then, dear young friend, whosoever thou art, is the point of wisdom. Mind, day by day, and through all, an inward sense respecting things, and thou mayst be favoured to perceive what thy duty calls for

at thy hands, as to thy outward, temporal, domestic, or social occupations; and then what time thou canst properly spare for company and books, and how much of either thou canst enjoy, with religious benefit to thy own mind. Much company and many books, or much reading, have often a direct tendency to draw the attention of the mind outward, instead of inward. And here there is need of wise discrimination. If thy company, or thy reading, tends to give thee a humbling view of thyself, and of thy many frailties and infirmities, and to increase the ardour of thy mind, in the pursuit of divine help, of inward quietude, and sweet, enriching peace, thou mayst conclude so much of it is good for thee; but if either of them be such, or indulged in to such a degree, as unprofitably to occupy thy mind, and rather indispose than encourage thee in the love of inward recollection and meditation, thou mayst safely conclude there is a snare in it, and that there is danger lest the durable and precious substance may be lost in the pursuit of the shadow.

The three following Letters were written to young men who lived with W. G. as apprentices.

1801.—9 *mo.* Being favoured to desire that thou, and the other young men, may be kept in a reverent, tender fear of offending the Lord your Maker in any thing, I seemed most easy to attempt a few lines to thee, after this manner, without any wish to write much, but so as to reach the divine witness on thy mind.

I tenderly request thee to weigh these remarks solidly; and at such time as thy mind is most favoured with good desires for thyself, and at such times as thou art favoured to crave that, when thou hast done with the things of time, thou mayst be found worthy to have a place in the mansions of eternal rest and peace. Now,

I believe that the way to be truly happy, is to endeavour to do the will of God. The way to enjoy the blessings intended for his dear children, is to serve Him, and obey Him in child-like simplicity; to dwell under a sense that He is our Father; and to look up to Him, as He that can provide for us, take care of us, lead us, feed us, and keep us. To have this sense upon the mind is very precious, and is what I crave for me and mine, and those under my care. Here self is gradually reduced, and kept under; and we are made sensible, that there is no safety for us, whatever may be our attainments, but as we are doing his will; and as we are measurably clothed with a tender, filial fear, lest we should be found doing any thing that would deprive us of a sense of his love upon our spirits. As this is not at our command, so we are led to prize it, when He is pleased to favour with it; and when it is withdrawn, and we are left barren, and poor, and stripped, and have nothing, as it were, to lean upon, and no feeling of inward support and comfort, oh! what poor things we are, let things in the outward be as they may, ever so fair and flourishing: they are fleeting and uncertain, wearing away one day after another, and leaving us in an unprofitable state, if we have not something within to animate and enliven our minds. As we come to make a right estimate of things, and are favoured to love the Truth above all, and to value a sweet and quiet mind, and the feeling of divine love upon our spirits, above the transient enjoyments of time, we come to feel and to know, that nothing is a little thing to us, which prevents us from drawing nigh to the Lord in our hearts, and offering up ourselves to Him in secret dedication, [saying,] "Here I am: make me to be thine, and preserve me from offending Thee in thought, word, or deed; that so Thou mayst be mercifully pleased to enrich my mind with the light of thy countenance, and to favour me with thy life-giving presence."

——As time is very uncertain to us all, both young and old, and we know not whether another opportunity so favourable may present, I feel a tender inclination now, at parting, to tell thee, that I sincerely wish thee well; and under that influence, to call thy attention to thy own immediate situation, that, by a discreet and timely consideration, thou mayst avoid some of the dangers to which I think thou art likely to be exposed. Thy time of life, and the time of a young man's engaging in the world for himself, is attended with many snares. Gilded prospects, which are calculated to deceive the inexperienced mind, if not strictly on its watch, are apt to present; and a state of innocence liable to be interrupted, if not lost, which cannot be recovered but through deep suffering.

I apprehend thou art favoured to have a mother tenderly exercised in her spirit for thy good. This is a first-rate blessing. This was my case; and the care and counsel of my dear mother, when I was very young, I believe, made impressions which have never been erased. She taught me early to know that I was not my own, nor at my own disposal; and that, if I would be safe and happy, I must look to the Lord for counsel. Now this I wish for thee. In all thy movements, be sure keep this in mind. It will, I trust, be an inestimable treasure to thee; confirming, in thy happy experience, that the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, preserving from the snares of death. When temptations, of whatever description, assail, forget not the fear of the Lord; that thereby thou mayst be favoured to witness preservation, and escape. Be in earnest to be good;—the only way to be happy. If, through unwatchfulness at any time, thou art in any degree overcome, be sure thou be willing to come under condemnation, and bear the chastening hand for disobedience: be willing to endure affliction for transgression, and do not flinch from it. Let it have its appointed season, and the dispensation of condemnation will have a refin-

ing tendency, and thou wilt be likely to come up from the washing-pool, from time to time, with increased strength to resist succeeding temptations. We must not expect to be exempt from these. Bearing this reproof and chastisement will give thy mind weight and solidity; and thou wilt, I trust, come to be less and less susceptible of the allurements of the trifling things of the world, and thou wilt be more and more enabled to set a right value upon things. Unlawful things, and trifling things, will come to have their proper character stamped upon them, in thy view; and thou wilt be likely to increase in thy love for quietness, watchfulness, and meditation. As we are sincere and in earnest, although the root of evil as well as of good lies deep in the heart, we may find that, as things of an outward nature are permitted to be snares and baits to our minds; so, many things of an outward nature are permitted to be religiously helps and comforts, and a strength to us, in our journey through time to an everlasting home. Thou wilt find that it is good to prefer the acquaintance of those who, thou believest, sincerely fear God, and to read such books as tend to bring our attention home, and to strengthen this fear in our own hearts. Light and frothy company, and light and frothy books, though specious, thou wilt find wound the peace of the mind, estrange it from the fear of which I have been speaking, and indispose to seriousness and heavenly-mindedness.

God is the source and centre of happiness. In proportion as we yield ourselves to things which the Light he has afforded us testifies against, in the secret of the soul, we go from Him, and go into confusion; and so miss of the mercies, the favours, the consolations, which He is permitting those to partake of, who dread nothing so much as losing his divine approbation, and the sweetness resulting from it. Do not be halting, and double-minded, I entreat thee; but yield thyself up to

be a consistent Friend, to speak, act, and appear as such, and I believe thou wilt be blest.

When things present, bring them to the Light: if they will bear the test, we may conclude they make for lasting peace; if they will not, they make for perplexity, and, sooner or later, for distress.

My heart desires the illumination and strengthening of thy mind, to follow that which adorns the humble Christian, and to flee that which leavens into the spirit and friendship of the world, and ends in disappointment and sorrow. Dear —— now is the time. Learn to weigh things correctly: often consult the pure witness in thy own heart; mark well and attentively what it leads to, and what it leads from; and may the blessing of preservation attend thee, is my heart's desire.

Thy well-wishing and affectionate friend,

W. G.

——As thou art about finishing thy apprenticeship, I have had it at times on my mind, to express a few things in writing before we part; as what is written sometimes remains longer under notice than what is spoken, and may be occasionally referred to, in moments of affectionate recollection of those with whom, and under whose care, so considerable and so important a portion of time has been passed.

I have no reason to think that thy coming to live with us was wrong; and I think it no small privilege that we have got through, so as to love one another at the conclusion; and I hope that, as we are preserved to desire well for ourselves, in the best sense, we shall continue, at seasons, to remember one another with pleasure and affection.

As to business, I hope thou hast attained a pretty competent knowledge of it; such as will, with humility

and industry, under the divine blessing, promote thy getting, in due time, comfortably established for thyself. But my principal object, at present, is thy preservation out of those things which hinder or retard an advancement in the Truth; and if we miss of that, how transitory, and of how little value, is every thing else.

Thou hast much to be thankful for in the inestimable favour of a religious parent, who has solicitously cared for thy best welfare; and I think thy mind has been, through outward and inward means, so imbued with a sense of what is good and excellent, that, if thou art properly watchful, thou wilt be blest with an increase of spiritual knowledge and spiritual strength, and of capacity to overcome those propensities to which by nature we are prone. In order to this, I beseech thee in an especial manner, to be careful what company thou joinest with. I think thy own happiness much depends upon it. It was rather before thy time of life that my mind became seriously arrested, and a desire raised in me after the knowledge of substantial good. This good, dear ———, is to be known, I believe, by submission to the cross of Christ, under which the divine light breaks in upon the mind with sweet instruction, to our edification and help. Though in this process our own wills are frequently opposed, yet it is here we are made acquainted with that which nothing else can give us. I believe the experience of many has proved this to be true. Suffer therefore, nobody to deceive thee, or tempt thee to believe that there is any other way to be happy. In submission to the refining discipline of the cross of Christ, the mind is prepared to receive good from the divine hand, both inward and outward good, and to receive it with true relish and with thankfulness; and I think we shall not become happy without it. As the mind, by this refining submission, is brought into a state of fitness to receive, I believe that divine mercy and goodness is ready to bestow; and here a precious state is known. And as thou seest things thus, thou

wilt find that it must, indeed, be good company, to be better than no company; and thou wilt find that too many young men, as well as older ones, are too much unacquainted with the state I have mentioned, and are more in speculation and reasoning than in living experience. But I entreat thee to keep to thy own business, and the peace of thy own mind; that is more to thee than any thing else: keeping steadily to meetings, and to the practices and conduct of faithful Friends. This will, I believe, tend to keep thee in favour both with God and man; and I believe that thou hardly needest fear doing well also in outward things. And as thou art favoured, more and more, to know what inward peace and quiet are, thou wilt be more afraid of those who know not what the truth is by experience. The way of Truth, I believe, increases in brightness as we walk on faithfully in it, in humble submission to its discoveries. Here the creature is abased and kept in a teachable state, and those discoveries made, and that establishment known, which are no otherwise to be come at. Therefore mind, I beseech thee, the discoveries of Truth; and if, through unwatchfulness or infirmity, or natural propensity, thou at any time slippest aside, be diligent, by repentance and submission to the rod, to get thy peace restored. Oh! the danger of letting commissions and omissions gather one upon another, for want of coming under the washing, purifying dispensation of the Spirit of Truth. How many have wofully missed it herein, and incurred a hardened state of mind, unsusceptible of the tendering impressions of good. But I desire thy preservation, and that thou mayest know an establishment in the blessed, unchangeable Truth.

In true love,

Thy sincere Friend,

W. G.

Extract of a Letter to two young Men.

1815.—6 *mo.* 9. I think my sincere desire is, that the Father of mercies may take you and preserve you under his gracious care; and so renew, from time to time, his enlightening influence on your minds, as to enable you clearly to perceive the transcendant excellency that there is in the Truth; and to engage you to prefer it, and your advancement in it, to every other thing. It is cause of real satisfaction to me, that you are capable of business, and inclined to be industrious and persevering. I think your attention to these lawful and commendable pursuits, under due regulations and restrictions, may not only prevent your active minds from being drawn out after things less innocent, but furnish you with ability to be useful to others. Nevertheless, I wish to remind and warn you, that temptations will not be wanting: the enemies of your own house, the propensities of our nature, will closely beset you in one shape, or other, in one direction or other, adapting the bait to the circumstances, disposition, turn, and inclination.

Under this persuasion, how solicitous I am that you may be circumspect, and maintain a daily watch; so that preservation may be experienced on every hand. Often bear in mind, I tenderly entreat you, that our great and bountiful Creator's view, in the formation of his creature man, was to make him completely happy, by the enjoyment of Himself, his own presence, his own love, light, and peace: so that our greatest wisdom is to aim continually at this point, which is the great end of our being. If we are thus preserved, we shall endeavour to bear the trials, afflictions, and disappointments of this life, in such a manner as may bring us, day by day, nearer, and nearer, and nearer to God, who is the perpetual fountain of happiness and of consolation. In like manner, we shall endeavour to enjoy prosperity

and the comforts of this life, and the many blessings which surround us, in such a sweet, thankful, humble frame of spirit, as will be well pleasing in the divine sight. We may be benefited, I believe, even by prosperity as well as by adversity, if the mind be kept in a state suited to our dependent condition; for dependent indeed we are, every moment of our days. Thus we may be brought on our journey, whether longer or shorter; so as that, whenever the end comes, either in middle or more advanced age, we may enter, through the divine mercy, into the fruition of that state, where there is neither want, sickness, nor pain; and where all tears are for ever wiped away.

We cannot too often look at things after this manner: we ought to do it daily, or oftener than the day. It does not unfit us for the concerns of time; but it leads us to give the preference where it is so justly due, and where our interest requires us. It leads us to desire, in sincerity of heart, that divine goodness will be near us, and help us in all states and conditions, and under all our temptations and trials; so that we may not lose our hold of good, but may continually advance, as our days spend and pass away, towards that which is the end and perfection of our being.

CHAP. V.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS WRITTEN FROM THE YEAR 1800 TO 1811; WITH SOME OTHER PAPERS.

1800.—5th *mo.* 18. We are again come up to the yearly meeting; not, I trust, that we think, or thought before we set out, ourselves of much consequence here; but wish to think it a favour that we are once more permitted to mingle with Friends in their annual solemnity. Yet I remember that after all, we must, after partaking of the strength derived from the exercise and concern of the lovers of the cause, retire into our own littleness; live, if we do live, upon our own little morsel; and depend for daily help and daily supplies, as well as for final succour and acceptance, upon the mercy and favour of Him who knows all our infirmities; and who knows how far some of us are from that heavenly, redeemed state, which I believe many of us would gladly arrive at, however far we may yet be from a due willingness to submit to the terms. Well, my beloved friend, may the sweetness of divine consolation be thy experience, to enliven thy declining years, support thee amidst the varied conflicts allotted, and sweeten the bitter cups which the diversified stage admits of to the travellers who are passing over it.

I remember at this time, a nice young man. Many dangers attend such as he is; a lively, pleasant activity for business; and no doubt many ready to associate with him. May he wisely remember how easy it is for the mind to be drawn into things, the enjoyment whereof is attended with no true sweetness, and which produce flatness and barrenness, if not bitterness in the end of

them. May he remember, none are safe companions who have not the tender fear of God before their eyes; who do not endeavour to yield their minds to that cross which brings into exercise and conflict, and forbids a rest in sensual gratifications, which are vanity, and afford no substantial and enduring comfort.

I have thought that many would like to feel the comforts of religion, but miss it from expecting to find some great thing to begin with; whereas, perhaps the way appointed for most, is to begin with something very little; and it would be well, when our minds are exercised and grieved that we feel little or no capacity towards good, to consider whether there is not something manifested that we are not yielding to. Perhaps this is the very thing which is to be the door of entrance into the path of life, and of increasing consolation, and experience of good.

1802.—8 *mo.* 6. One thing I seem inclined to mention for thy encouragement; and that is, to request, affectionately, that thou wilt not let discouragements take place, as to the attendance of meetings for discipline at a distance, now that your borders as a quarterly meeting are enlarged, and the remoteness may be an additional bar to thy going. I believe thy company will be strengthening and encouraging to the rightly-concerned present, and their company reviving and consoling to thee. Let not thy deafness discourage thee: thy being, in measure, gathered into thy own exercise, will, I believe, help forward the cause. Even the countenance of an Israelite, I believe, strengthens many a drooping mind; and there are opportunities, now and then, though it may not be our lot to be very active, of manifesting on whose side we are. So that I am inclined, from some persuasion of its usefulness and fitness, to encourage those who, with thyself, sincerely love the cause of Truth, to keep close to it publicly, even in declining days, as to age. Indeed, I have

been of the mind for some time, that if things go on well, the more active part in our meetings for discipline will not always fall on those far advanced in years; but they will probably often sit by, and, like careful fathers and mothers, encourage by their presence and by their weighty spirits, the younger and middle-aged to come up in and maintain their respective ranks; and now and then, in the language of experience, put in a few words, well-seasoned and well-timed, to the increasing of the weight and solemnity. O! the use of the company of fathers and mothers, my beloved friend, in our Society. O! the pleasantness of seeing the hoary head in our assemblies, having kept the faith, having loved the Truth, and believed in it to the end.

1803.—6 *mo.* 3. It was not pleasant to me that I did not either see or write to thee before I left London, which was not until the 28th. I have repeatedly had in view the expectation I gave thee of a little explanation of my views concerning the investigation of certain points which have often been considered as mysterious, and which I should gladly express in such a manner as would tend to thy satisfaction.

I am inclined to believe that it is not the design of Unerring Wisdom, that the mind should be satisfied about these things, by the exertions of its own powers; but that He has wisely reserved to himself the communication of this satisfaction, dispensing it to the minds of his creatures, when, how, and in what degree he sees meet, from time to time. It seems that a real progress in divine knowledge is very differently to be attained and experienced, from what may generally be expected and desired by mankind. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.—See *John*, vii. 17.

It is very gratifying to the natural mind, to have a very full and comprehensive view of the subject of re-

ligion, at the beginning of the work; but the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ appears to be very differently intended to be opened to the mind; beginning, frequently, with a little light or manifestation of the divine will, as to some point or part of duty. And as obedience is yielded to this small manifestation, let it be respecting whatsoever it may, greater and greater degrees of light and of strength are afforded, to follow on to know more and more of the divine will, and of divine things. This is very humbling to the natural mind, which would willingly be getting on faster: but the real, divine manifestations of Light and of Life must be humbly waited for, and the mind clothed with reverence and fear, lest it get on in its own wisdom, and mix something of its own with the communications of divine Light and Life; for it is well to remember, that "in Christ, (the Word) was Light, and that Light was the Life of men." Now as the mind is really favoured to believe that all good comes from God; and that its own conceivings and searchings, in its own wisdom and strength, will end in disappointment, and short of that clearness and evidence which truly satisfies, it is brought into a humble, waiting state; and in this reduced, dependent, humble state, as any thing is made known from the source of all true good, I believe a sweet, substantial, satisfying something will attend it, which all the exertions of the mind, in its own wisdom and activity, cannot afford. And as this comes to be really known and believed, a fear possesses the mind of entering into abstract speculation concerning divine things; preferring rather to wait, in humility and reverence, upon God; not doubting but He will be pleased, if we yield obedience, day by day, to the manifestations of his light in our minds, to make to us such discoveries as He judges best and most suitable for us.

Now, as the Holy Scriptures are read in this disposition of mind, depending on God, through the spirit of Christ in the soul, for the opening of them to our un-

derstandings, we may, I believe, often be sweetly refreshed, comforted, and edified, even in reading a very few verses. And if we meet with any thing which is not quite clear to us, we may rather feel disposed to leave it, than to reason, search, and contrive concerning it. Thus thou wilt perceive that I believe the religion of Christ to be a religion of faith in Him; and that, as in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so, as we are brought into a state of true waiting and dependence upon Him, and upon the manifestations of his spirit on the soul, we are in the way to be rightly introduced, from time to time, into such degrees of knowledge in divine things, as is truly best for us, and best adapted to the state of our minds; and that it is not consistent with divine wisdom to communicate the treasures of heavenly mysteries, but as the mind becomes, through true obedience, refined and prepared for the reception of them.

1804.—7 *mo.* We find, as you do, the present scene and state of things greatly chequered. Many favours and many trials are our lot; and I am ready, at times, to wish that I may not expect to find it otherwise, having little room for it. If I may judge from the fifty years which are passed over my head, what appears to be wanting is a more settled and firm abiding, where neither the storms and tempests, nor the sunshine of time and temporal matters can fully shake or move. For this experience I think I do long, and in measure, I think, pray that this longing may never, never be lost, until a perfect, abiding establishment be, through heavenly goodness, experienced. If the tossings and exercises which are met with, both by you and us, may but happily contribute to this establishment, what a favour and mercy will it be.

Is not the great thing which is wanting in our religious Society, an individual travail, a close attention to individual duty, whereby we should more experience a

fitness and qualifications for collective service, as well as more availingly contribute to the advancement and spreading of Truth? But whilst I lament my own languor, I wish not, my dear friend, to discourage thee; but rather that we may unitedly be animated to lay hold of every offer of best help; and persevere, in increased and increasing hope and confidence, to the end.

1806.—3 *mo.* We have of late time had to wade along under many exercises and trials, not fully known to any but ourselves; yet I think we have cause humbly to acknowledge that we have been permitted to hold up our heads, and not altogether to sink under discouragement. If the varied conflicts which we have, from time to time, to endure in our different allotments, do but happily tend to increase our acquaintance with the Supreme Good, and to strengthen our confidence in the divine superintending care and protection, it will be well; and we may have to acknowledge that it is good for us that we have been afflicted. I wish to guard against unprofitable bewailing; and rather press on, in a grateful remembrance that we have many favours and blessings intermixed with the difficulties of the day.

It is, indeed, a nice thing, and requiring a portion of best wisdom, to know how to move along in temporal concerns. To be suitably alive to the useful discharge of our duty as to temporal matters, and yet to have the mind so detached from them as to have the one thing needful perpetually before us, is a most desirable attainment. Uncertainty is so stamped on all visible enjoyments, that we had need, indeed, to be solicitous to have our minds established on something beyond them all.

1806.—11 *mo.* 27. I consider it particularly valuable to young men, to be placed, not only where they may be learning a pleasant and respectable business, which, under Providence, may be the means of pro-

curing them a comfortable maintenance and provision in the world; but where their amusements and engagements, in the hours of relaxation from business, will be likely to be of the innocent and rational, as well as religiously-consistent kind. To fill up the hours of leisure rightly is a nice thing; and I hope thou wilt be especially careful of it, particularly in thy reading. I wish thee to read what thy master and mistress approve: such things as may be promotive of thy preservation in religious tenderness; and, when not of a religious nature, such things as will improve thy understanding, and enrich thy mind with profitable knowledge.

It is not unpleasant that the ground which was once my grandfather's, father's, and afterwards mine, is become the site of a meeting-house for Friends of Brighton: a place where it was, about fifty years ago, not very unlikely, looking outwardly, that there would be hardly any Friends to hold a meeting. I can remember, when I was a boy, sitting on a First-day, by the widow Wilkins's fire-side, to hold our meeting: perhaps about five or six of us in number. There is great cause for encouragement to Friends, both youth and elder, to be faithful to known duty; then, I believe, we shall indeed be blessed with increase both in numbers, strength, and dignity, with the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth. Very early in life we may do something for this great and noblest of all causes, the promotion of Truth upon the earth. Abstaining from every appearance of evil, will give to a very youth a certain dignity of character; and will be accompanied with humility, which, indeed, is a most excellent adorning, and without which other qualifications and graces lose much of their beauty.

1810.—1 *mo.* 21. —— Thus it is: we pass away one after another, and the place which has known us shall know us no more. I long that those in the vigour

of life may increasingly bend to every discovery and manifestation of duty, which is the way to increase in religious strength. I think I never saw, more than lately, the usefulness and necessity of diligence to acquaint ourselves with that divine good, which alone can console and sustain the soul in the hour of trial and extremity; and I feel, whilst I write, desires that thou mayst, for one, prize the present day. Love retirement, and frequent, solemn introversion of mind; that so thou mayst increasingly see thy duty and service in religious society, and be careful to do it with Christian magnanimity and faithfulness, showing, on all occasions, on whose side thou art, that thou mayst be an example and encouragement to others to do likewise. Time spends apace, and I am desirous thou mayst be a truly religious character in your large meeting. O! the beauty of an entire consistency. How does the example of such operate, within the sphere in which they move! How does it avail to their own individual good, the help of others, and the prosperity of the cause of Truth!

1810.—6 *mo.* 24. I understand thou hast a fresh companion, which, I apprehend, will be agreeable to thee; and I wish you may be strengthened to encourage one another in faithfulness to the requirings of Truth, and not the contrary; which is sometimes unhappily the case with young men taking countenance and encouragement from one another, in smaller or greater deviations from the simplicity of our noble profession. A sight and sense whereof, I believe, thou hast been favoured with; and keeping faithful to what thou seest, is the way to have the understanding enlarged, and to see more into the law of liberty—precious liberty, wherein the mind is raised, in measure, above the bondage of this perishing, unstable world. I desire thy preservation in innocence, and under the teaching of the best Preceptor; and though it may, at

times, be to our humiliation, and we may be led along in a path of self-denial, yet, remember, none ever repent having timely and early submitted to his discipline; but many, many have to lament that they delayed the submission of their wills too long, and thereby increased their own difficulties.

1810.—7 *mo.* 25. Those manifestations intended for real, solid, and permanent good, are oftentimes in the cross to our own nature; but, as yielded to and obeyed, they tend to change our nature, even to introduce that nature which does the will of our Heavenly Father with delight. And I believe such are always blessed, and partake of substantial good, though it may be often mixed with trial—such being the terms of this life: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." But remember the foregoing words: "these words I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace."

1810.—10 *mo.* 2. I noticed thy remarks on the difficulty of keeping the mind under the divine influence. I believe this is not in our power, or by any means at our command; but yet I think much depends on watchfulness, and religious, tender care of our movements. As we keep humble and watchful, I believe the influences of good are more perceived and longer retained: the mind becomes more and more in love with them and desirous of them, and more afraid of things which indispose it to wait for them; and so it is that our nature becomes changed, and we, prepared to run the ways of the Lord's requirings; and our minds to be content with what is according to his will. So, my dear ———, do not look too far before thee, nor suffer the suggestions of discouragement to prevail unprofitably; but remember, "Greater is He that is in thee, than he that is in the world." I desire thy encouragement to look to the Lord, and to believe that He will furnish the willing and obedient mind with

ability to take one step after another in the way which is well-pleasing to Him, until a capacity is known to walk with a degree of blessed firmness and acceptance; although there is no state to be expected here beyond a state of humble watchfulness. May it be the happy experience of us all.

1811.—8 *mo.* 7. I hope, if permitted to accomplish your union, that you will be a comfort to each other, and that your principal care will be to walk in humility, reverence, and fear; knowing, as we cannot but know, if we be wise, that uncertainty marks the path of man, and that our most precious and endearing enjoyments in the outward, are only rightly held and possessed, as they are held with humble gratitude.

It would be very pleasant to know ——— well settled: not that I consider that he may be losing time, unless it be in delaying to take up the cross, and follow, in humility and resignation of heart, the Saviour of men. I am ready to think that the likeliest way for many young men to get forward, as to an establishment in the world, is to seek earnestly and carefully after the pearl of greatest price, trusting in the divine promise: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' I rather think that many who may be steady, respectable characters, yet not submitting to all the terms needful for those who desire, above all things, to secure to themselves the divine blessing, prevent that substantial advancement, even in temporal things, which they would more easily be favoured with, if they were more weighty in spirit, and more fit to be placed in respectable stations at the head of families, having more or fewer young men under them. Could ——— come enough to put his trust rightly in Him, to whom belongs the earth and the fulness thereof, and whose are the cattle upon a thousand hills, I think something would

open; and it would be a comfort to see him, thus trusting and thus depending, settled for himself.

1811.—10 *mo.* As time passes over, we find fresh and fresh exercises brought over our minds; and I believe it is hardly safe to expect it will be otherwise, whilst we are conversant with the vicissitudes of time. The infirmities of our nature are a great trial; and we are very liable to have an addition, from unexpected circumstances, over which we do not appear to have any control; but, as in the outward, clouds and sunshine succeed each other, so it is with us. And I am in degree comforted at this time, in some little capacity to salute thee as a beloved elder sister, in the faith and tribulations of our present pilgrimage; in the tribulations common to mankind, and in the faith vouchsafed to the humble, exercised Christian. It is a very precious thing, that, although at times and seasons we are permitted to feel ourselves very destitute, tried, and deserted; and to be, as it were, enveloped in our own nothingness and infirmity; yet, that at other times, a sweet, sensible quiet is witnessed, and a degree of confidence raised in the sustaining confidence of the Lord our God. Here there is no desire to feel ourselves strong and self-sufficient, or to feel the creature exalted; but it is felt to be a mercy, and precious favour, that we can lean upon the divine arm of power, and trust in the source of true consolation. Here the waves and the billows are stilled; and we are, as it were, ready to say, "What has become of our sorrows?"

Well, my endeared friend, I believe thou hast abundant cause to trust in the Lord, and put thy confidence in the Holy One of Israel; inasmuch as He has been thy fear and thy dread, thy shield, and the lifter up of thy head. What have we else to trust to; however encompassed, however tossed and perplexed? And I believe thou knowest, that sometimes, after a season of rather peculiar trial, comes a day of distinguishingly

refreshing sweetness and calm. It is a great consolation, that sweetness and peaceful enjoyment are not inseparable from outward prosperity. Indeed, we do well humbly to rejoice and be glad, that tribulation produceth the fruits of righteousness, if rightly endured: but our nature shrinks from suffering.

——— Thy case and situation seem to require the kind attention of thy friends. Thy frequent neglect of meetings for worship bespeaks thy mind to be not in a tender, religious frame; but unguarded, and too indifferent about thy own everlasting good. There was a time, I believe, when thy mind was much more sensible of the benefit of attending meetings; and when thou wouldst have been afraid to be absent, except something particular prevented thy attendance. Now it seems a light matter: seldom more than once on a first-day, sometimes not once; and seldom on a week-day. It is not the way to gain strength in the best things, to neglect opportunities of waiting on the Lord. Remember the Scripture saying: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." But they who neglect to wait upon Him, are in danger of having their minds dissipated, and turned from good, and of coming to have a pleasure and delight in those things which once they esteemed not worth pursuing—things which bring no solid peace to the mind. These are accompanied with a sting, and with bitter remorse, unless the pure witness in the mind be so stifled and buried, that it be not heard nor understood, but blindness, darkness, and insensibility prevail. This is a dreadful state; but I trust this is not thy situation. Yet, I think, if thou dost not speedily turn about, thou art in danger of losing the sense thou once mayest have had of the sweetness of a religious life and conversation. Light, unguarded company, is liable to be a sad snare

to thee. Evil communications corrupt good manners; and we may be insensibly leavened, if not upon our guard, into the nature and spirit of those who do not walk in innocency. Thus, one thing after another, of which thy judgment may have been convinced, may be called in question; plainness and sincerity of speech, plainness of apparel, simplicity and innocency of manners, may all be departed from; and thy poor mind be exposed to many, many dangers and temptations, from which thou mightest have been preserved, if thou hadst carefully maintained the watch;—if thou hadst fled from every appearance of evil, and been afraid of having the tenderness and sensibility of thy mind hurt, by touching and partaking of things of which thou once sawest the evil and inconsistency.

Do not be deceived, or believe any one to be thy true friend who would rejoice to see thee dishonour thy profession, or set light by any tender, religious scruple. It is a great favour and blessing to have a tender mind, fearful of doing any thing to offend our Maker; and those who know not the value of this tenderness of mind, and would willingly rob us of it, are to be guarded against as dangerous companions.

I do not mention this because I believe thou hast not once known it to be true; but I believe thou hast opened an ear to that which, if followed, will lead thee into confusion, if not to ruin; confusion as to the state of thy mind, and as to thy profession as a Friend; and, perhaps, confusion as to thy outward concerns.

I see nothing but that the situation at —— might afford thee a competent livelihood, if properly minded; but it will require care. It will, I believe, require thee to be frugal and careful in thy expenses, careful of thy time, regular and punctual in doing thy business, and steady in attention to it. If thou art too often from home, thou mayst lose more in two or three hours than will be got again in a week. By all means, be consistent. Do not seem one thing, and be another.

Be an industrious tradesman, and mind thy business. Let hardly any thing call thee from it, except thy religious duty; and take care to give a suitable preference to this duty, above every thing. This will make thee careful how thou conductest thyself in thy business, with punctuality, honesty, integrity, and humility. Thou wilt fear to dishonour thy profession in thy words or in thy ways, and this is the way for thy neighbours to have a confidence in thee; for though some may scoff at, and deride the way of Truth and of simplicity, yet all like to have to do with those whom they can depend upon, and who they really believe are preserved by a principle of integrity, from doing them an injury, even if they had it in their power.

Do not despise little things, as some may call them; remembering, "he that despiseth the day of small things, shall fall by little and little." And by little and little thou mayst get so far from the right way, as never more to return to it; thou mayst depart from the way of innocence, the way of plainness, the way of humility, the way of safety, so far as to have, in the end, to lie down in sorrow, and to wish that thou hadst never known better things, rather than, having known them, to depart from them, and trample upon them.

I believe thy situation very dangerous, and requiring particular watchfulness and resolution: because thou hast, I believe, opened thy heart to some things of an evil tendency; and that will, if not speedily and firmly stood against, tend to the blinding and darkening of thy understanding.

I think I need not make any apology for this friendly freedom; as I did not see that I could be clear in my duty to thee, without submitting a few hints to thy very serious perusal.

With desires for thy real good,

Thy respectful Friend,

W. G.

Religion is a very serious thing, and by a great man is, I think, thus defined: "Religion is the fear of God, and its demonstration good works; and Faith is the root of both." Religion, therefore, taken in this sense, which I think is the true sense, is one thing; profession is another. A man may, at his own option, and against conviction, change his profession; but his religion he cannot so easily change. If a man is religious, he fears God his Creator; fears to offend Him in thought, word, or deed, and considers himself bound to walk conformably to this fear. Now, according to the degree of true light upon the understanding, is a man's religion. He cannot, at his option, change the convictions of this light; though he may act in opposition to them, and thereby incur condemnation. If a man does not fear God, I conclude he has no religion; if he does fear God, and walks answerably thereto, he endeavours to act according to the best evidence afforded to his understanding, as to what is, and what is not, agreeable to the will of his Creator concerning him. Thus, if I am not mistaken, a man cannot, at his own option, change his religion: although, as he can act in opposition to what is really the religion of his judgment, he can, if he be not conscientious, change his profession.

We believe, as a religious Society, that the duty of a religious man is to endeavour to know his duty as a Christian, both as to matter and mode, and then carefully and conscientiously to do it. Forms of profession may be various; but the truly pious, of all denominations, are, I believe, near akin. They unite in one grand and fundamental respect;—a sincere desire that their whole lives may be conformable to the will of their Creator. This desire embraces not only spiritual, but temporal things; and, with regard to their religion not only the life and substance, but also the form and profession of it.

It may well appear strange and wonderful to the believing mind, that the sceptic should not discover it to be a more reasonable conclusion, that that Divine Being, whom we contemplate as self-existent, omnipotent, and omnipresent, of infinite wisdom and goodness, the centre and essence of all created existence, in whom, therefore, we live, and move, and have our being, should be ever mindful of those rational creatures whom He has brought into existence;—that it should not strike him, as consistent with a Being of infinite purity and infinite wisdom, who is ever inseparably near, to adapt his sensible influences to the varied circumstances of a creature so fallible, so liable to error as man; rather than to leave him to himself, to find his way through this life, and to conduct himself in it, by means of any faculties entrusted absolutely to him. That he has faculties, and a capacity entrusted to him, there need be no doubt; but he has, surely, need of a regulating, superintending, all-intelligent preserver, to encourage, to check, to reprove, to animate, to stimulate, to restrain, to cherish, to console, according to the various circumstances to which the creature may be subject, either from causes over which it has no control, or from the wanderings and errors incident to humanity.

That there is such an influencing principle is the supreme joy of the just, who live by faith; and it may well be matter of admiration to them, that the sceptic cannot believe that it exists, or that it is possible it should exist. Well, now, suppose the sceptic should begin to believe that such a thing is possible; and then let him imagine, that some who have taken a different path to himself, have really found, by experience—by experience so often repeated as to have become undoubted proof to them, that such a precious, such a powerful principle does exist; and not only exist, but does act influentially for their good, to their humble

and thankful admiration. After this, is it not highly reasonable for him to conclude, that, in admitting the doubts which he has entertained, he has been unwise? that he has shut up the way to his experiencing what others have come to know?

Suppose again, that those who have come to this experience, (for, after all, experience is the great baffler of speculation,) do find in the Scriptures abundant testimonies to an inward experience of this same living, active, and influential principle in the hearts of others, which they believe they have found in themselves, is it not highly reasonable that they should entertain an extraordinary value for these writings; and that, finding so much in them which they cannot but highly approve, and which they cannot doubt the truth of, they are very fearful of underrating them, and thereby depriving themselves of the help, the consolation, and advantage to be derived from them. These writings give their believing reader to understand, that this pure, active, influential, regulating principle, is the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of Immanuel, God with us: in other words, that dispensation, revelation, or display of the divine nature, life, and power, which is adapted to the situation, the benefit, the exigencies, of created intelligencies. And these believing readers, finding that the power which acts in them, which influences, incites, reproves, restrains, and comforts, eventually tends to good, they cannot doubt that it is divine—that is of God. Hence arises an increased value and esteem for these writings, as testifying of a divine principle so precious, and of the experience of others respecting it, and of its power and virtue, so corresponding with their own views and experience of its excellency, and of its refining, sanctifying tendency.

CHAP. VI.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS WRITTEN FROM THE YEAR 1812 TO 1819.

1812.—1 *mo.* 4. Many are the ways by which our poor minds are liable to be brought into trouble; I think I know this, not only from the relation of others, but from my own repeated experience. Sometimes inadvertences of our own become a source of affliction and distress; and sometimes this is accompanied with infirmity both of body and mind; and, from these complicated causes, the poor creature is plunged into unspeakable perplexity, from which it sees no way or probability of escape; and is hoping sometimes for relief one way, and sometimes another, but no permanent quiet can be obtained. Like the sea, that unstable element, whose billows run very high, and wave upon wave, so rest and quiet seem to have taken their leave of us. But as man did not form, or create himself, so, neither can he deliver or preserve himself. Yet, I believe, in these seasons of deep distress, poor mortals are under the immediate and peculiar notice of the Most High; and, in the language of one of his favoured servants, we may say, "There is none so nigh sinking, but He puts his hand under their head." He knows all our difficulties and perplexities; He marks our solitary wanderings, and sees the path which we take. O! then, from whatever causes our distresses arise, whether ever so simple, or ever so complicated, it is good, it is safe, it is most wise to trust in Him, to cast our care upon Him, who knows our frame, and remembers that we are but dust; and by whom, in the emphatic language of our blessed Lord, "the very hairs of our head are all num-

bered." The great thing is, and I hope, as thou tenderly desirest it, thou wilt more and more experience it to be a truth; the great thing is, to endeavour to be still and wait for his salvation, under a humble, but quiet sense of our own inability to help ourselves. Guard against impatience or activity, but crave to be favoured with stillness. Let the billows pass over, and wave upon wave; but keep thou in the quiet habitation, and wait to see what will become of the storm. Do not imagine that thou canst still the tempest, nor attempt in thy own strength to do it; but endeavour to stay thy mind on Him who formerly, when his poor disciples were in dismay, said to the wind and the waves, "Peace, be still; and there was a great calm; and they were filled with wonder; and cried out, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him."

1812.—9 *mo.* 20. I think that, on both sides of the middle path of life, there is great danger of mixing with the spirit of the world. It is very observable, that abundance of the good things of this life, that ease, and large acquisitions of knowledge, have that tendency. On the other hand, where there is a great want of literary qualification, where there is rusticity of manners, and a necessity to be plodding hard for a livelihood, and where temporal conveniences are but poorly supplied after all, there is a great liability for the mind to be let down into the same state, at least in degree, as we too often see amongst the poorer classes of the people at large. Not but that Truth, which is omnipotent to all good purposes, is fully equal to preserve in all right allotments. But how shall we in the middle stations, be sufficiently thankful that the "lines have fallen to us in pleasant places,"—in profitable places, may I not say.

It seems to be the great thing wanting in myself, and I suppose in the Society, a capacity rightly, and there-

fore availingly, to pray; but we must look forward, and press forward: having put our hands to the plough, it will not do to look back.

That "we are not our own;" that we are not to gird ourselves, and walk withersoever we list, is a truth so clear and evident to the enlightened mind, that it should be, I think, almost a first principle in education, in doctrine, in the habitual frame of the mind. But who are sufficient for these things?

May you be favoured to get into that spot where, the eye being kept single, the body is full of light;—where the earnest desire and breathing of every one is, that no one may be wounded or hurt;—where the willingness to part with selfish views is known;—where the preservation of love, harmony, and sweetness, is felt to be more precious than any outward good; and where the mind craves, above all things, that every movement may be agreeable to the will of our Heavenly Father, and tend to his honour and glory, and the promotion of the cause of peace and righteousness. And I sincerely question, whether there be any way in which we more acceptably serve Him, than when, in the transaction of our outward affairs, we are preserved in meekness, quietness, and self-denial, with our eye and desire to Him for guidance, limitation, and protection.

1812.—11 *mo.* 29. The principle of light, life, and power, as submitted to, more and more leads the awakened and dedicated mind out of a conformity to the maxims and manners of the world, by a path of humble self-denial, to the enjoyment of a peace which is substantial, sweet, and precious. Press after it, my dear friend: press into the enjoyment of it: whatsoever sacrifices are required, I entreat thee to make them through the renewings of best help. Do not embitter thy future days, by persevering in opposition to the clear manifestations of the light of Truth. Get not into abstract reasonings on things; but eye the light, and fol-

low it, step by step, as the way is opened for thy complete deliverance.

How precious it is, my dear friend, in important movements, to feel a humble, reverent, filial trust in the divine blessing on our undertakings; and though, at times, we may not be favoured with very clear and strong light upon our path, yet, being preserved in a fear of offending, and in a sense that, without the divine blessing upon it, all our acquisitions and enjoyments will have a void, a painful void, here we are in the way of safety. There is, may I not say, an indescribable distinction between those who have really believed in the reality of divine, inward, immediate communication to the soul, and those who have not. Faith in this divine gift is a most precious thing—a most valuable treasure; not to be trifled with; not to be bartered away; but to be reverently, humbly, and perseveringly treasured up, improved, and lived upon. Remember this, my dear friend; and may heavenly goodness be near to help, direct, and sustain thee. Amen.

1813.—2 *mo.* 18. ——— Our principles are calculated to inspire love, esteem, and confidence; inasmuch, as they point to humility, a general, courteous behaviour to all, and to strict punctuality. How do I desire that * * and * may be favoured to keep little and thankful; sensible what a favour it is to be enabled to procure, by industry and attention, a comfortable competency, and at the same time sensible also that this is not all that we want to make us truly useful and happy. Uncertainty attends the most flattering outward prospects. Young men engaging in business are much to be felt for and sympathized with, that they may be preserved from unprofitable depression on the one hand, and undue elevation on the other: happy if they can be preserved, using their best, honest, and upright endeavours, whilst they feel a dependence on our

Heavenly Father for the needful supplies of strength of body and mind; of prudence, of discretion, and well-regulated affections and desires.

1813.—3 *mo.* 2. In the flowings of love, and in the enlargement or expansion of the mind, we may, I believe, sometimes be ready to recommend writings which are really very estimable; and yet in which, from the first word to the last, perhaps there is not a single pointing to the Word nigh in the heart, the divine gift, or light of Christ. Does it not require great care how such are recommended? I write with caution, not wishing to prevent any good; but it wants to be more understood in the world, (and what if this be one of the great ends of our being raised up,) that it is not comprehending sublime truths, even the truths of the Gospel, so much as seeing and knowing our own individual part of the great whole, that is the grand *desideratum* for us all; and which, do we not allow, cannot any way be so well known, as by diligent attention to this divine gift? Attending to this divine gift in ourselves, and so being drawn and kept under its influence, it becomes our element, and we move healthfully and safely along in it. And in this element, not out of it, we may look at many things, and touch many things, perhaps without spiritual loss, and possibly with spiritual advantage; but the danger and the loss seem to be from meddling with religious and spiritual things, out of this element. Keeping in this element, we are in the way of feeling the liberty of Truth, and its blessed restraints, as to touching, tasting, or handling this, that, or the other thing, that is thrown in our way.

1813.—11 *mo.* 12. It is indeed occasion for thankfulness, that thou art permitted to report so favourably, which I hope may continue to be the case, as thou art preserved desirous that thy days may be spent in humility, watchfulness, and fear; so that the blessing may

attend thy honest and upright endeavours. There is a fear lest any right endeavours on our part should be wanting, which, I believe, is acceptable in the divine sight, and tends to preservation; and there is an anxiety and earnestness, which, I believe, wounds the religious mind, and is not fruitful of good. So that the prayer formerly put up, is emphatically adapted to the Christian traveller of all generations: "Give me neither riches nor poverty, but feed me with food convenient for me." And I am glad thou art favoured to be connected with those who, whilst they are caring that temporal matters may be prudently and reputably ordered, are desirous of giving the upper hand to those things which perish not with the using; but which are necessary to be sought after, cherished, and preferred, whether our allotment, as to the outward, be in prosperity or adversity. I sincerely desire your preservation, and that the best blessing may attend and enrich your minds: so may the effects thereof be increasingly your happy experience; even meekness, patience, contentment, sweetness, love.

I am sorry for the account of poor ———'s misconduct. I am in hopes that separation and restraint from improper company may place her in a capacity to discern more distinctly wherein true happiness consists, and the path which leads to it. Speaking on the subject, I am reminded of the experience of that dignified disciple of the great Master, Isaac Penington, where I think he describes himself as in a state of mourning for all the miserable, however deservedly so.

It was very pleasant to hear so agreeable an account of ———, for whose preservation out of every hurtful thing we can unite with you in desire. And I wish he may be favoured to see what a privilege it is to be comfortably introduced into business, without the hazard, to which many suffer themselves to be exposed, of convulsive shocks, which endanger both temporal and spiritual comfort. He seems to have slidden into an esta-

blishment very easily, and perhaps with as much encouragement as is desirable. I hope nothing will be permitted to take him off his feet, either prosperity or adversity, for there are snares in both; but that, by endeavouring to appreciate the favours received, he may set a proper, not an improper, value upon them, and see the necessity of watchfulness in every stage of his progress, if he would be kept from wandering, and know an advancement in the pursuit and enjoyment of substantial good, temporally and spiritually.

> "Oh! the long list of mercies undeserved,
> And oh! what greater gifts are still reserved."

So that there is abundant encouragement to those who are humbly in the pursuit of happiness, within the limits and appointment of that Wisdom and Goodness which are infinite.

1815.—2 *mo.* 16. In the first place, and preeminently, I am anxious, my dear, ——, to say, that if thou wert to be induced to leave ——, I should entertain little doubt but that an enemy had done it. When, through the permission of a kind and gracious Providence, we are so situated as to be not only comfortably provided for, set down with comparative safety, and free from the risks to which many are exposed, which greatly agitate and prevent a religious growth; but are also in the way to make a reasonable, and even a handsome, provision for that time of life, if permitted to reach it, when much exertion would be inconvenient, if not unsuitable:—when we are thus circumstanced, how needful it is for the religiously-visited mind to labour after a state not only of content, but of gratitude; and in the very depth of sincerity, on any contemplation of a change, to say, "O Lord, I beseech thee, if thy presence go not with me, carry me not hence." Oh! the many ways there are by which we may be betrayed from a state of humility and reverence of mind, and drawn out of the land of Goshen, the spot

appointed for the children of promise, into the land of Egyptian captivity, where confusion and darkness prevail, a darkness which may be felt. My heart, I think, in measure, travails for thy preservation out of those things that lift up the mind, prompting to aspire after great things; and unfitting, disqualifying, to sit, in a lowly posture, at the feet of Jesus, the holy example of obedience and self-denial.

With me it is a very tender thing for any visited mind to leave a situation, in which the blessing has not been withheld, inwardly and outwardly. It is, I think, a ready way for the ungrateful receiver to experience a withering as to the divine life, and often lamentable miscarriage as to the outward.

Oh! the safety, the unspeakable advantage of keeping heaven uppermost, and the earth undermost. May this never be unhappily reversed in me, or any, for whose welfare I am particularly concerned.

1816.—9 *mo.* 19. I hope, with moderate industry and prudent care, you will be permitted, if your days are prolonged, to continue making some additions to your property; thereby enlarging your sphere of usefulness, as well as increasing your comfort. Much riches I do not covet for you: they are not necessary for our sweetest enjoyments. Supineness and inattention are productive of very little good: but moderate application, in a reliance on the blessing of Providence upon our humble and upright endeavours, adds much to our comfort, keeping our faculties bright, and even, I believe, the more susceptible of good. I wish your comfort, and that you may rightly appreciate the time and opportunity put into your hands, wisely *applying* your attention between spiritual and temporal things. I had written *dividing*, but I drew the pen over it, thinking the expression exceptionable: because I believe we may be favoured to have our minds so preserved as to maintain an undivided preference for that which is

best of all, (though necessarily engaged, and rightly so, in the concerns of this life,) and to feel that we have indeed a connection with ever and ever, whilst we are conversant with the vicissitudes of an earthly pilgrimage.

1816.—12 *mo.* 28. It is a very interesting and momentous time for you; and I suppose you hardly ever had more occasion for best wisdom to direct your deliberations, that all may be done in sweetness, harmony, and love, as well as with wisdom and a sound mind. I desire your preservation and ours on every hand, that true happiness and comfort may be your peaceful portion and ours, and, in the end, your and our enriching crown. I believe, in order for this, it is needful to dwell very low, where the right discernment is given; and the feeling known, whereby a capacity to distinguish is attained, and preservation witnessed.

As you desire in simplicity so to move as you believe will be the readiest way to solid peace, I hope and believe that a blessing will attend you. When the mind is preserved in a watchful care to do right, and is fearful of wounding its own solid peace, I believe that, although many perplexities may be permitted to attend the path which we tread, yet He who sees us and knows our thoughts, and who, as a Father pitieth his children, pitieth those that fear Him, will remember us in an accepted time, and be as a hiding-place from the storm. So that it is good to trust in Him at all times, and to endeavour to walk, as we believe, considering our respective circumstances, will be acceptable in his holy sight.

My desire is, that you may study moderation in your pursuit of business; not stretching your arms very wide; endeavouring to carry a snug sail, as the safest in stormy weather; not hazarding the peace and composure, the solid happiness, of your minds, for any specious and glittering, but uncertain and dangerous pros-

pects. Be content with what you can, through favour, compass, and compass with satisfaction.

1817.—3 *mo.* 20. A tender sensibility, and a disposition raised in the mind to crave and press after that which can be depended on as substantial, sustaining food, is very precious. It introduces into the exercise of that faith which becomes, from time to time, the Christian's victory, and, through heavenly goodness, his eventual triumph. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith."

My object seems to be to express a desire that thou mayst indeed be preserved in a state of humble dependence on the divine arm of Omnipotence; not seeking or desiring great attainments; but preservation near to that which has visited, believing that in that are hid the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, ready to be handed forth according to the good will and pleasure of Him who doeth all things well. Mayst thou live in a state of watchfulness for the unfoldings of heavenly counsel, as mercifully, from time to time, and at any time, vouchsafed; desiring also to increase in subjection of the will, and in well-timed obedience. To the obedient mind, I believe, the unfoldings of heavenly counsel are vouchsafed, in a way and time suited to our condition.

Considering how supremely needful it is for the religiously visited mind to attend to its own peculiar exercise, I have felt solicitous that nothing, however specious, might involve thee in unprofitable speculation. This does not go to the prevention of the exercise of our mental faculties, as rational creatures; but to the exciting of great watchfulness and care, to distinguish what, in our mental pursuits, makes for peace, and what does not. There is a precious saying; "As many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." It is a great favour to have, in any measure, put him on; and greatly, I believe, will it tend

to our safety, to be pretty sure that we do not put Him, the beloved of souls, off, and clothe ourselves with something else, in any of our pursuits, even those which have a religious or spiritual semblance.

1818.—11 *mo.* 10. Probably some of those having the care of youth, and heads of families, among whom I include myself, have not been enough concerned to watch the openings of right capacity in themselves to convey, and the openings of right capacity in the youth to receive, lively instruction; and it appears to me, that this watchfulness for the opening is the thing wanted among us. It is, I believe, a humbling, heart work, and would greatly promote the growth both of guardians and their charge.

—— Amidst the contemplation of the subject of religious instruction, I have remembered with some comfort, those expressions of our blessed Lord to his followers: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now;" and I think it certainly requires care, how we press religious truths too far beyond the religious capacity of young people; perhaps not possessing the essential preparation for the reception of diffuse religious instruction, a resignation of the mind to bear the cross. To excite a willingness to bear the cross, with an eye to the crown, I consider a first principle in Christian education. If I am not mistaken, it has often been inculcated as a sound principle, not to puzzle ourselves too much to comprehend doctrinal passages of Scripture; but to leave them to be opened to our understandings, if needful, in the due and acceptable time.

—— I think, my dear friend, though I have said so much, (I fear too much for me,) I should scarcely be satisfied without now suggesting one idea that has often presented, respecting the instruction of our young people: *viz.* I fear the public recommendation of any specific plan, for obvious reasons; but when one indivi-

dual, or more, see their way to set about it, within their own sphere of action, I think it may be useful and safe; because this may be continued and prosecuted, as far and as long as the oil flows: and when it ceases, procedure may be dropped, or contracted, as freedom warrants. And if the blessing is on it, we may safely trust that it will be productive of benefit, and that the example will be influential, and perhaps widely so. This latter remark may, in degree, apply also to pressing the reading of Friends' writings. A thirst for good will naturally lead to this. To excite this thirst, then, seems the first object. To a mind not thirsty, Friends' writings are, I believe, often very dull and insipid: to a mind in which the thirst is excited, they are, indeed, as a brook by the way; very precious, very sweet, very reviving.

Leaving this, shall I mention without wearying thee, that it has lately occurred to me, that an advantage might be derived from pleading our belief in the Divine omnipresence, as one reason of our silent waiting in our meetings, and at other times: namely, because we believe that He is ever near us; that He is ever over us, round about us; and because in Him we live, and move, and have our being? And although we are not at all times permitted to be sensible of his presence, yet whenever it pleases Him, he can make us perceive it, as in the twinkling of an eye, and comfort us with his light and love. And believing that this perception of his love is our greatest good, and not at all at our command, we find it our duty and our interest, knowing that He is ever nigh at hand, to wait his time and pleasure for making us sensible of it. And when He is pleased to bless us, and to bow our minds, and the faculties of the soùl, in reverence and prostration, under a sense of his goodness, and of our absolute need of Him and dependence upon Him, then we believe is performed in us, and by us, that worship which is acceptable unto Him. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship

Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." And in order that this worship may, from time to time, be performed in the newness of life, it must be in fresh ability, which He giveth, or rather lendeth; for He does not bestow it as an abiding capacity, to be exercised in our will and time; but it must be, from time to time, humbly and patiently waited for. Would it not be a likely thing to impress this view of the Omnipresence on the minds of young people, as most precious and consolatory, and as that which should inspire us with awe, and reverence, and abasedness on one hand, and with animation and confidence on the other.

1818.—11 *mo.* 25. My sincere desire is, that the circumstances which have occurred may be sanctified to you; that the blessing of Providence may be over you, and round about you; and that the blessings of love, harmony, and peace, on a right and pure foundation, may be your enriching experience. I feel for your prosperity on a right ground so sincerely, that I return again to that subject. Keep low and humble, and attentive to best instruction in the secret of your own minds; and then, I hope, preservation will be vouchsafed to you. Do not crave great things. Remember the saying of a worthy character: "I desire not riches, but to owe nothing." Thou knowest I like commendable industry. The sluggard cannot reasonably expect to prosper; but then our eye, and the dependence of our minds, should be to the Lord, and to his blessing upon our honest, upright, and moderately circumscribed endeavours. In any material and important movement, consult us with much openness and unreserved freedom, as we desire thy preservation on every hand. I believe all right situations have their attendant probations; and however we may move, we must not expect to be without them. Trials bring weight; and a weighty mind is a great blessing.

It is a matter of sincere regret that —— has so much

travelling. I am well aware of its unsettling and injurious tendency, as it respects the humble, tender, well-regulated state of the mind of almost any Friend.

1819.—1 *mo.* 23. I have entertained some fear, lest I had not properly expressed my own views and wishes, on some part of the subjects touched upon in my communication of the 11th month;* particularly that of encouraging young persons to read the writings of our early Friends. Perhaps no one wishes more sincerely than myself, to see this practice prevail among our young Friends, as well as those more advanced. It is particularly cordial to me to see young people so engaged; and I desire it may be encouraged in every proper way. There are many ways, doubtless, of doing this; and I feel anxious that nothing which has escaped my pen may discourage any honest and upright endeavour to promote this object. Many of the writings of our worthy predecessors, with some of those of later date, I esteem an invaluable treasure to the Society, not to say to the world; and my desire is, that they may be duly appreciated by all ranks amongst us.

I am fully aware that a careful parent or guardian may very suitably recommend or use Friends' writings, as one means, and a very likely means, to excite and increase the thirst here spoken of; and perhaps, just in this place, I may not improperly tell thee, that this morning, just when I was thinking to address thee, I very unexpectedly cast my eye on a few lines, which I sometime ago penned, and which I had quite forgotten, to the following import: they may seem somewhat illustrative of my view of this matter. "If the mind is directed to that which is good, becoming tender in the

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* See the last preceding Letter but one, page 79.

fear of the Lord, expecting all good from Him as the everlasting fountain of happiness, peace, and comfort, there is a good foundation laid for receiving the openings of Truth, either immediately by the Spirit, or instrumentally by the Scriptures, ministry, or good books."

1819.—9 *mo.* 18. We have often cause for thankfulness, when we can remember any past opportunity with sweetness and satisfaction in the retrospect. This has been the case with respect to thy late visit to us. It left me tenderly interested about thee; so much so, that I seemed as if I might not do safely, if I omitted telling thee so. I think I am not mistaken in believing that thy mind often possesses a precious sensibility of desire after good,—after peace and substantial happiness. And oh! the longing that I have felt that nothing may be permitted to quench this desire in thy heart; but rather that it may grow and increase, until nothing, nothing in this world, may bear any comparison with it in thy estimation. Endeavour, I beseech thee, to keep thy mind inward unto the Lord. Lean upon Him, trust in Him, and He will sustain thee in the humbling path of self-denial and lowly-mindedness. I do not mean a voluntary humility; but that humility which is induced by a watchful, well-timed obedience to the secret manifestations of the divine will. This will humble the creature; but, blessed be his name, it leads into, and preserves in, a capacity to receive the further and further manifestations of his Will, of his Truth, of his Light, of his Love, even as He knows we can bear it, and as, in his wisdom, He sees meet to unfold them to us. But, oh! the great loss which is sustained, I believe, through the want of following on to know Him, in the only way in which we can attain to the knowledge of Him, the way of Faith; which word implies not only belief in, but reliance and dependence upon Him. And though this may sometimes be found

a tribulated path, I believe it is the path to the kingdom of heaven—the kingdom of peace and joy; begun, and revealed in degree, I believe, to the redeemed mind even in this life, and consummated in that which is to come.

When I consider where thou art placed, the large meeting thou belongest to;—how desirable it appears to me, that thou shouldst make an early and full surrender. Keep in the quiet: keep in sweet innocence. Let peace be the primary object; and then other things rightly permitted and dispensed, will be enjoyed with humility and thankfulness.

What would sincere dedication and submission in a few individuals, do in your large meeting. How would example strengthen and encourage others to come forward, who are halting between two opinions; and whilst they hesitate, weakness besets, and probably increases: whereas, if faithfulness were yielded to the manifestations of Truth in the mind, how would the divine arm support and sustain; how would strength be afforded to walk steadily forward, perhaps with feeble and diffident, but with safe and peaceful steps. Oh! the exceeding preciousness of early dedication, of early submitting the creaturely will to the discoveries of duty. Inasmuch as the Almighty is the fountain of happiness, the more we look to Him for direction and safe guidance, the more likely we are to arrive at this fountain; and, I believe, in condescending loving-kindness, He is dealing with those who early make Him their choice. I believe He gives them to experience his fatherly care over them; and every now and then gives them some proof that it is well for them that they have trusted in Him.

I do not wish to enlarge; but I want to encourage thee to be of those who sit alone, and keep silence; bearing the yoke, that precious yoke, which, through divine goodness, keeps down in us those dispositions and

propensities, which, if not kept under, will retard or prevent the growth of the plant of renown, in that dignity and stature which it otherwise would attain, and which should outgrow and overgrow every thing else in us.

——— I was not sure whether the cause [of religion] might not, in some degree, suffer from my remarks respecting the intimations of Truth to the mind about outward concerns. Perhaps an apprehension of the right thing suffering by our friend's over-rating some of his impressions, at the same time that he is managing so poorly, might drive me too far in expression on the opposite side. Exceedingly precious, when vouchsafed, do I esteem the guidance of a gracious Providence respecting outward things. But I think I have noticed that some of those whom I have loved, esteemed, and honoured, have been very cautious of speaking of this favour, as it respected themselves; probably considering it as something that is better known and felt, than talked about; and scarcely enough given them as their own, to be made so free with:—being, in order to keep the creature humble, low, fearful, dependent, and in self-abasement, so gently and faintly, though intelligibly marked and defined to themselves, as may serve to preserve them walking by faith, and not by strong sight. Should a suitable opportunity occur, perhaps thou wilt mention a few words expressive of my sense of the matter. I should not like to hurt the cause, nor wound our friend's mind to his disadvantage. I trust I may thankfully say, that I am a humble believer in the condescension, goodness, and mercy of our heavenly Father to his dependent children, both respecting their outward and inward condition and circumstances.

—— I wish both you and we may be favoured, at seasons, with the renewings of best ability to desire for all the youth, most particularly the objects of our care,

that the divine fear may be richly placed in their hearts, as the most effectual way and means for them to inherit every blessing consistent with the Heavenly Father's will for them to enjoy ; and as the blessed preservation from the many evils which abound in the world, and which court their affection.

CHAP. VII.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS WRITTEN FROM 1820 TO 1823.

1820.—3 *mo.* 9. It is not pleasant to me, that thy kind and acceptable letter of last month should have remained so long unacknowledged. I believe it can be attributed to no cause more justly, than to the poverty of my own mind; though I am aware, that the expression of this is not likely to make thee rich. However, it behoves us to endure with patience our allotment, and the various changes which are permitted; and happy is it, if our poverty be not the consequence of our own indolence, inattention, or disobedience. My own health is very favourably continued; but I very often remember the flight of time, and that many, very many sands have escaped from the glass. This is a chequered and very uncertain scene: how happy for those, who under all, and through all, are permitted often to cast anchor; and feelingly to acknowledge, that the Lord is good, worthy to be waited for, served, honoured, and obeyed, under all circumstances, and in all conditions.

1821.—12 *mo.* 15. Oh! the importance, as I view the subject, of Friends keeping in the unity, out of disputations, in the self-denial, (which includes a willingness to suffer,) in the littleness and abasement, rather than that any of Truth's testimonies should fall to the ground.

I think I never saw the necessity and value of Friends in this nation being a compact undivided body, more than now; that its conduct may speak, not a con-

fused, but intelligible and inviting language to those who are seeking rest for the sole of their feet.

I consider it may have been a great favour to our Society to have been disqualified, as the criminal law stands, from serving on juries; as well as, I think it is, from accepting places of profit under government, in the present mixed state of things. And I suppose we neither of us apprehend that Friends, as a religious body, are less in danger from the spirit of the world and its friendship, than they were a century ago.

1822.—7 *mo.* 3.* Though much attended with mental poverty, I seem not easy to omit saluting you with a few lines expressive of endeared affection, and of a hope, that amidst the various ways in which the cause of Truth may, under the divine blessing, be acceptably promoted, that in which you are now engaged may be one. And under present feeling, I seem as if I might say, it matters little whether the flock visited be smaller or greater, or whether what we have to communicate be little or much, if the great and gracious Shepherd condescend to own the engagement with the animating influence of his love.

> "A little with the blessing is a deal;
> Witness the widow's oil, the widow's meal."

I think I can say my heart dearly salutes you, and craves your preservation in the meekness, innocence, and simplicity of the Gospel. I, if capable of seeing any thing, think there is great beauty and precious safety, in those who come in amongst us, keeping enough to the measure of their own gift and experience; endeavouring daily, as it may consist with the

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* This letter was written to some of his friends, when on a visit, by appointment of the Meeting for Sufferings, to the Friends of Pyrmont and Minden.

divine will, to know an increase therein, but not outstepping their guide. Oh! what sympathy is called for, on behalf of sincere and tender minds, circumstanced as this little flock is, in such a country. May your visit tend to strengthen in a lowly, humble, quiet, inward dependence on the increase of the gift, individually received, as the likely way for them to be a strength to one another.

James Parnel says to Stephen Crisp, "Be not hasty to know any thing beyond thy measure;" and really there does seem something very precious in this, provided the measure be fully kept up to; and we are preserved out of all supineness, lethargy, and inattention. Do remember as a poor brother, that wishes to make some humble advancement in solid experience of that good, which in a day of trial will be more to us than all the world. However appearances may be against it, I have been in so poor a spot myself, as to seem almost unfit to meddle with sacred things, beyond my own breast; yet you see I venture—I hope I humbly venture.

1822.—7 *mo.* 3. What a scale of usefulness do —— and —— move on, compared with some of us: but then I remember, that no one in sincerity of love and attachment to the cause, shall even shut a door in the house for nought. And there is great sweetness, I believe, often experienced in the humbler and more retired walks in the Master's vineyard; so that all depends, may we not say, on endeavouring to be just what we should be, whether it be foot or hand, or only as a finger on the hand.

1822.—10 *mo.* 22. What a beautiful society, I believe the Society of Friends would be, if all were diligent to improve the talents bestowed upon them; pressing daily towards the mark of our calling; not resting contented in any state, known and felt to be imperfect;

and thereby encouraging others to be easy and satisfied in a state of imperfection. I have of late thought, that however assailed with weakness and trial, it will not do to rest herein; but using the strength afforded, be it little or much, wage war with every thing which we feel impeding our journey to a state of acceptance, wherein there is no condemnation.

1822.—10 *mo.* 25. I know, dear friend, that human nature is liable to be much tossed, and tried, and perplexed, sometimes with looking back, and sometimes with looking forward; but our safety, I think, very much lies in seeking after quietness and resignation, faithfully and in simplicity endeavouring, in our outward employments, to discharge the duty of one day at a time, without being over anxious; but quietly trusting in the Lord for ability to get through the duty of one day after another, as they come in succession; because He knows exactly our situation and circumstances; and how availingly to pity us and to care for us in all our temptations and besetments, so that there is great advantage indeed in quietly looking to Him for succour. Be sure, do not look for or desire great things, either inwardly or outwardly; but desire, above all things, to be kept in humility and fear, that so thy steppings may be safe and sure: in them is sweet preservation. I believe this is the state in which we are at times favoured to see a little light upon our path: and I desire thee to be thankful for every degree of true light, be it ever so small; for we have nothing truly good at our own command.

1822.—12 *mo.* 14. It has often occurred to my mind, that events of this interesting nature [the loss of our near and tender connexions] frequently furnish fresh occasion, calmly and deeply to ponder what are the next steps for the nearly-connected survivors to take; a little light upon the path of the bereaved, at

such seasons. is exceedingly to be prized, and if duly appreciated, is, I believe likely, under a sense of loss and stripping, to increase our dependence on the guidance, protection, and sustaining arm of heavenly Goodness.

1822.—12 *mo.* 21. The removal of our venerable elder William Tuke, will, I think, be felt interesting to many; as of a standard-bearer in our camp. I feel desirous that his decease may have a tendency to quicken and animate many, to stand nobly for the cause he was concerned to advocate; not for the establishing of their own views, but the advancement of true piety, holiness, and humility, and thereby the glory of our heavenly Father. I believe it would be acceptable to Him, that as one faithful soldier is removed, others should the more nearly and diligently unite, that there be no breach in our ranks; but that we might, notwithstanding, press forward and advance, as a well-ordered army, under the invincible captain. It feels, as I write, precious to me to believe, that what we sometimes denominate "the cause" is unchangeably good, and worthy to be espoused, being the promotion of the glory of God, in the happiness and salvation of man. And I am a little cheered in the hope, although many, and some very pleasant persons, are too much at ease, very much short of a state of dedication and resignation, and of perfect obedience, yet that the call will continue so availingly to go forth, that many will be aroused, and induced to come forward with increased zeal and fervency of spirit, clothed with humility as a garment; and that our society will yet be beautiful and lovely, an ornament and a praise.

1822.—12 *mo.* 29. May we be preserved so humble, so lowly, so in the spirit of gospel self-denial, as becomes the devoted followers of Christ; and as would enable beholders to discover in us the genuine features

of his flock. I hope I hate formality for formality's sake; but when Friends have had the privilege of being trained and accustomed to a plain, exemplary dress, I am concerned that those I love may use great caution, ere they depart from it.

My apprehension is, that the present time is a dangerous one to Friends. They are courted and smiled upon by the world; and, without very great caution, we are liable, in our civil and religious intercourse with them, to be drawn away from that weightiness of spirit, wherein true religious advancement, I believe, is known. The true, real, and genuine ground, upon which Friends have been mercifully brought, I believe to be exceedingly precious; and our safety and usefulness to others much depend on our keeping upon it, that we may be strengthened availingly by our example to invite others on to it, instead of quitting it to go on to theirs.

It becomes truly religious characters not to run with the changeable spirit of the times. We may maintain a care respecting this, and yet have humble views of ourselves, not thinking ourselves better than others, nor piquing ourselves on any peculiarity; but in watchfulness and fear, endeavouring not to quit our ranks, or give occasion by our example to any fellow-soldier to desert his.

1823.—4 *mo.* In all the circumstances and changes which we have to experience, what a favour it seems to be, to be strengthened to stay our minds upon the Lord, and to feel at times a sensible, refreshing calm, in which we can rejoice with thankfulness, though with fear, knowing how little it is in our power to command, or preserve, or retain this feeling; but yet it is very sweet now and then to get a little portion of it. It is something to recur to, and is indeed as a brook by the way, enabling to hold up the head; and thus, in low,

succeeding seasons, how encouraging it is to remember that there is this precious state to be at times known. How does it furnish occasion still to trust on, and not cast away our confidence; but to believe that although our lot may be in poverty of spirit, yet that the gracious Shepherd, whose goodness and mercy are unbounded, will never leave nor forsake us, as we endeavour to trust in Him. So that however tossed, or however beset with trying things, let us often, very often, center down in humble quietness, and calm dependence on the Lord; and then, I believe, he will sustain and preserve us.

1823.—10 *mo.* 18. It has been a subject of very considerable anxiety, that we might be comfortably supplied with a companion gifted with the requisites to contribute to soothe and solace our declining days, which I consider of very great consequence; that the mind may be sweetly at liberty to husband and improve the supplies of good mercifully vouchsafed day after day, so that there may be a little verdure, even in advanced age. In adverting to the changes we have experienced within the last year or two, how apt is the mind to dwell on the privations, when we might more profitably be clothed with gratitude and humility, in a sense of the many privileges vouchsafed, and continued, and renewed.

May Friends of every class be encouraged to come up to the mark assigned them, in firmness and humility, two very requisite companions to each other in the Christian character; I might have added, and wisdom. I do believe that the want of these, and of more quietness and inward attention, has tended to lay waste the minds of very many in our favoured society; intended in divine wisdom and mercy, as I sometimes think, to have been a compact, separated body, endowed with

very precious gifts and favours. If there is too little of a capacity for inviting others, to be seen in many places, there are many amongst us who desire the prosperity of Truth. And oh! that none of us may shrink from baptism: for may this not be called the only way for truly dignified and useful members to be produced in the church?

CHAP. VIII.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS WRITTEN IN THE YEARS 1824 AND 1825.

1824.—1 *mo.* 1. Thy allusion to the experience of a winter season, might meet a similar statement from us, and I doubt not, from many more; and seeing this feeling and allotment are in the permission of a wisdom which cannot err, I desire we may accept them with thankfulness, and be enabled wisely to improve from them, quickening our diligence in the great and highly important engagement of watchfulness, and deep inward retirement of mind, before Him who knows exactly all our wants, and how and when to relieve them to our lasting advantage. Under a feeling of inward poverty and want, of late known and felt, I have thought it exceedingly desirable to labour after inward quiet and attention, that the strength may be rightly felt to be renewed, and our religious experience, in the goodness and mercy of Israel's Shepherd, to be enlarged. Hereby the ground-work of true patience would be laid, and the way prepared for that which is so much wanted among us; namely, for our becoming more a weighty, humble, watchful, self-denying people, spiritually intelligent, and diligent in submitting to divine requirings, advancing from step to step on the ladder which reaches from earth to heaven. May greenness adorn our evening, and divine love and mercy be our eternal crown of rejoicing.

1824.—3 *mo.* 15. Oh the simplicity that I think there is in the Truth! Oh the simplicity of the Gospel, and of an inward, attentive, lowly waiting, for the renewed revelations of it! How can this departure

from it [in America] have been occasioned? What a favour, if those who have been in any degree jostled off the foundation, may be in mercy brought back, and have to declare to others, that, in a cloudy time, they had missed their way, but are now, in humility and meekness, brought back to the quiet habitation, the place of rest and safety, where I believe the filial fear thou mentionest, is happily known and lived in. I hope our dear friends now among them will be graciously protected; furnished with the needful supply of wisdom and strength, and often have to lie down sweetly beside the still waters. Oh! what a favour we can conceive this to be, to the poor, exercised, and oft-tribulated servants. Recurring again to the occasions of sorrow, I seem to want to add, how strange it is that any who love the Truth in sincerity, should not dread the baneful consequences of breaking the unity—the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.

If I have any good desires, I think one of them is, that the ministry may be increasingly weighty among us. Our dear friends in that station are much to be felt for, and I wish that we may be favoured with increased qualification to contribute to their help and comfort. How does the desire arise, that there may be quite as much in weight as measure. It is a very interesting time we live in; and I think we are a singularly-appointed people. How desirable is it, that we may know our place, and keep it—a waiting, solid, self-denying people. Greatly favoured we have been; and we have reason to believe, shall be, if we keep to our principles—I might say, to our principle; the divine light, life, and power, revealed in the soul. Believing in this with steadfastness, I believe we should often have to be very poor, and sit very low. But I fear to say much on this important and weighty subject. Before I quite quit it, perhaps I may as well say, that I have (of late particularly) thought on the benefit and

excellence of quietness and retiredness of mind; and the want of it in our religious and favoured Society, as well as in the world at large. If it were possible to make Friends sufficiently in love with it, what blessed effects might be hoped for from it.

1824.—4 *mo.* 13. I am a believer in that representation of George Dillwyn's, respecting important deliberations and discussions in meetings for discipline, somewhat on this wise: that, when Friends are honestly, sincerely, and piously, engaged in delivering their respective views, with becoming condescension and feeling for each other, and the subject is drawing to a point, there is sometimes known a seal on the top of it, which bespeaks the conclusion to be owned. What a favour and encouragement is it, when Friends can perceive this!

1824.—7 *mo.* 30. I notice thy information respecting our dear friend's improvement in her health. It is indeed a favour, when humility clothes the poor instruments, as a garment from head to foot: indeed, what virtue is like it for value? It becomes the man with one talent, and it is quite as needful for him that has the two or the five. What are the most gifted without it, but poor, mistaken creatures, forgetful that in a moment all qualification for profit or service may be withheld and suspended, if not entirely withdrawn?

1824.—11 *mo.* 12. It is not likely that the expression of my poverty should make thee rich. I would rather endeavour to profit by every dispensation, that I may be favoured to know my attention quickened, and my feet more and more established in the faith, and hope, and patience of the Lord's children.

I am obliged for the various items of interesting intelligence contained in thy letter. May we who move in comparatively narrow spheres, be enabled to pray

for the preservation and protection of the sincere and upright-hearted under every allotment, and among all the vicissitudes permitted to occur. How do I desire that the sincere-hearted in America may be kept in the patient, steady pursuit of purity and holiness, and know from season to season the discovery of the brook by the way, enabling to hold up the head, and to trust on.

What a people should we be, if we all moved on, in the condescendingly-appointed order, desiring to be neither greater nor less, than divine wisdom intendeth us to be. Then surely would peace be our portion, and the glory be ascribed to the blessed and holy Head; and we be living as dear children of the same heavenly-minded family, abounding, according to the divine will, in the fruits of the Spirit.

1824.—12 *mo.* 8. Within a very short space indeed, I have attended to the silent grave the remains of two old acquaintances, respecting whom it may now be said, as by and by of us, the place that has known them, will know them no more. Not that I think it desirable that the dropping off of those, with whom we have been used to converse, should be allowed unprofitably to depress, but to quicken our attention to the solemn subject of the uncertainty of time, and of all temporal things: it is indeed an awfully-serious subject; and worthy of our daily and hourly meditation. Our Quarterly Meeting is again approaching: may it be a time of obtaining a little increase of strength, and of encouragement to walk in the path of faith, and humble confidence in the divine arm of Power.

1825.—4 *mo.* 8. My mind, one day this week, was, I think I may say, sweetly comforted in the contemplation of the blessedness of that state, which is preserved so low, so little, and humble and feelingly dependent, as to be thankful for even a morsel of heavenly

bread, and even a small portion of that living water which sustains the traveller in the path of faith; and this was accompanied with gladness, that, from the morning of our day as a religious society, it was given forth as the sense of Friends, respecting the Scriptures, that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false! It is very pleasant to me, that there is extant part of a letter from William Savery, of America, written at the time of the trouble occasioned by H. B.'s dissent from Friends, to a friend in London; a few lines of which I incline to transcribe, though I should not suppose they are new to thee; viz. "The longer I live, the more unshaken confidence I think I obtain, that the doctrines laid down by Robert Barclay and our first friends, founded upon the New Testament, and still maintained by the body of Society at large, are invulnerable to the efforts of vain philosophy, sophistry, and curious speculation, so long as we retain our belief in that most excellent of all books; and I am of the mind, that all such as depart from that foundation, will wither and be confounded."

1825.—4 *mo.* 23. Since our last friendly conversation, I have felt much interested in the comfort of thy declining years. Thou hast often mentioned to me thy uncomfortable feelings and prospects, respecting thyself and human nature. I believe, much of them is occasioned by thy not endeavouring to lay hold of the mercy of God, offered to his creature man, through the Spirit of Christ in the soul; because I think, and heartily believe, that by resorting to that, we are often permitted to feel our minds, through its blessed influence, brought into a state of resignation to the dispensations of Providence, and into a belief that all He does, however inscrutable to our limited and finite comprehension, is in perfect wisdom; and that his power is suffi-

cient to turn every thing that He suffers to befal us, to a good account in the end, agreeably to the apostle's testimony, "that all things work together for good, to them that love and fear God."

As we reverently believe that the Almighty is a being of infinite and adorable perfection in all his attributes, He stands in no need of any thing from us; but we stand in need of every thing from Him. And we cannot rationally suppose any motive in Him by the creation of man, but the communication of happiness to his creature. And it is good to entertain the belief, that this divine goodwill, and gracious design to communicate happiness, is not of a transient nature, but constant and perpetual, in Him in whom it is said "there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." And I cannot for a moment entertain the idea that this Divine and Almighty Being, who created man for happiness and immortality, is so little mindful of him, as, when he is come into the world, to leave him to shift for himself: a creature who, He well knows, has daily and hourly occasion for his providential care and fatherly protection. Remember that interesting saying of our blessed Saviour, "the very hairs of your head are all numbered," as emphatically descriptive of the tender notice and regard of the Most High towards his rational and immortal creatures.

I am sincerely interested in thy comfort; and I desire that the evening of thy days may be cheered by the enlivening persuasion, that thou canst not be from under the notice of Him, who is an omnipresent Spirit, and who is not only a God afar off, but also a God nigh at hand; about our bed, and about our path, and who spieth out all our ways; and, as David beautifully declares, "whose tender mercies are over all his works;" and that thus believing, thy sun may go down in brightness, and thy latter end be crowned with peace, the blessed presage of everlasting happiness.

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